MINISTRY OF FORESTS

Ministry Policy Manual

Revenue and Corporate Services

Consolidated to October 1, 2005.

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NOTE: This consolidation includes amendments 1 – 34.

MINISTRY POLICY MANUAL - REVENUE & CORPORATE SERVICES

REV No.	ISSUE DATE Y M D	INSERTED BY (initials)	INSERTION DATE Y M D	REV No.	ISSUE DATE Y M D	INSERTED BY (initials)	INSERTION DATE Y M D
1				26			
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5				30			
6				31			
7				32			
8				33			
9				34			
10				35			
11				36			
12				37			
13				38			
14				39			
15				40			
16				41			
17				42			
18				43			
19				44			
20				45			
21				46			
22				47			
23				48			
24				49			
25				50			

Hardcopy amendments can be downloaded from the web from: http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/tasb/manuals/policy/dwnld.htm

Table of Contents
Revenue and Corporate Services

Letter from the Executive

Introduction

1 External Relations

1.1 News Media Relations
1.2 Forest Service Emblem
1.3 Responding to Requests for Information
1.4 Printed Materials *(to be developed)*
1.5 Demonstrations and Occupation of Ministry Property

2 Program Audit

2.1 Internal Audit
2.2 Program Auditing and Monitoring *(to be developed)*

3 Finance

3.6 Financial Signing Authority
3.9 Business Meeting Expenses
3.10 Budget, FTE and Performance Management
3.11 Credit Management *(to be developed)*
3.12 Contract Management

4 Employment and Compensation

4.1 Lateral Transfer from Severely Isolated Locations
4.2 Classification Program
4.3 Classification Review
4.4 Position Classification Appeals
4.5 Organizational Change
4.6 Salary Administration for Excluded Management Employees
4.7 Flexible Work Options *(to be developed)*
4.8 Equity Issues Assistance *(to be developed)*
4.9 Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace

5 Training and Development

5.1 Employee Training
5.2 Employee Development
5.3 Junior Forest Warden Program
5.4 Rewards and Recognition
5.5 Performance Planning and Review
5.6 Education Leave

6 Safety and Health

6.1 Critical Incident Stress Management Program
6.3 Firearms - Forestry Use
6.4 Occupational Health and Accident Prevention
6.5 Risk Management - Ongoing Risks
6.6 Environmental Protection from Hazardous Materials *(to be developed)*
6.7 *Workplace Violence Prevention Policy*

7 Information Management

7.1 Standard ID Codes and Symbols
7.2 Operational Systems Review
7.3 Corporate Information Custodianship

8 Equipment and Asset Management

8.1 Marine Operations
8.2 Asset Control *(to be developed)*
8.3 Vehicle Operations

9 Administrative Services

9.1 Radio Communications - Systems Access
9.2 Records Management Program
9.3 Forms Management
9.6 Residential Accommodation *(to be developed)*
9.8 Security of Cabinet Documents

10 Risk Management

10.1 Risk Management - Business Disruption Recovery

File: 195-30/MPOL

November 1, 1993

To All *Ministry Policy Manual* holders

This manual supersedes all existing policy statements, specifically, Volumes I, II and III of the Ministry Policy Manual (green binders)which are now null and void. The new *Ministry Policy Manual* has been completely updated and revised.

The purpose of the *Ministry Policy Manual* is to establish official ministry policy through concise, non-technical statements and to communicate that policy to ministry staff, licensees, interest groups, and the general public. All the policies in this manual have been approved by the Executive of the Ministry of Forests. These policies are the primary guidelines for the administration and operations of the Ministry of Forests, pursuant to the Forest Act and other Acts and Regulations to which the ministry must adhere.

The Information Management Group of the Ministry of Forests is responsible for the formatting, printing, distribution, and maintenance of ministry policies. Any questions regarding the manual or the policy development process should be directed to the Manager, Planning, Information Management Group, at 387-6515.

Please remember that the *Ministry Policy Manual* is a collection of policy guidelines and, as such, does not replace decision making. If in doubt about anything in this manual, consult with your Branch Director or Regional or District Manager.

I would like to thank the ministry employees throughout the province who contributed to the production of this manual.

Yours truly,

Gerry Armstrong
Deputy Minister

Scope

This section introduces the *Ministry Policy Manual*, including its authority, purpose and role, and structure. Also included are procedures on developing, writing, approving, publishing, and maintaining the *Ministry Policy Manual*.

Overview

Welcome to the *Ministry Policy Manual*. The goal of this manual is to set out all Ministry of Forests policy. Policies enable the Ministry to accomplish its objectives in the most effective manner. Policies let staff make sound decisions while relieving the Executive, Branch Directors, and Regional and District Managers of involvement in routine decision making. Policies ensure that Ministry programs and operations are administered consistently, and that clients and members of the public are treated fairly and uniformly.

Authority

Effective October 31, 1993, the old Ministry Policy Manual, volumes I, II, and III, will be null and void, and will be replaced by these two new volumes.

The *Ministry Policy Manual* will be the only official version of Ministry policy. Therefore, Branch Directors are responsible for ensuring that all policy issues are addressed within the manual. Policy is not to be promulgated by memoranda.

Ministry policy is subordinate to and must conform with Government policy and that of central agencies, such as the Treasury Board.

Ministry policy must be reviewed and approved by Branch Directors and the Deputy Minister before being included in this manual. The "Developing Policy" section of this Introduction gives detailed information on the policy development and review process.

The *Ministry Policy Manual* is to be used as an aid to Ministry policy only and is **not** to be used for the purpose of legal interpretation of any acts or regulations covered herein.

Purpose and Role of Policy Manual

The purpose of the *Ministry Policy Manual* is to establish official Ministry policy through concise, non-technical statements and to communicate that

policy to Ministry staff, licensees, interest groups, and other interested members of the general public.

Other Ministry manuals and documents communicate a variety of essential information to staff. To avoid confusion, the term *Ministry policy* is reserved for the policies contained in the *Ministry Policy Manual*. Other information or directives distributed to staff should be termed *program procedures, guidelines, standards*, or other applicable terms.

Similarly, policy issued by announcement, press release, letter, memo, bulletin, or other means is not considered to be official *Ministry policy* until it is published in the policy manual.

Structure of Policy Manual

The *Ministry Policy Manual* is divided into two volumes: *Revenue and Corporate Services* and *Resource Management*. The *Revenue and CorporateServices* volume contains policies covering the administration of Ministry programs, such as financial management, human resources, and information systems. The *Resource Management* volume contains policies covering the operations of the Ministry, such as silviculture, fire protection, and timber harvest management.

Each volume is divided into a number of functional categories (chapters), such as *Program Audit, Recreation Management*, and *Fire and Aviation Management*. The chapters contain policies that relate to that functional area. Policies in one chapter may be the responsibility of several different branches.

Each policy is a stand-alone module and has its own:

- title
- section number
- revision date
- page numbering

When a policy is revised, the entire policy will be re-published with the most recent changes clearly marked. An *Amendment Log* will track each revision or addition to the manual. Periodically, the table of contents and index will also be revised and re-published.

New in this Manual

Policies are now grouped by program function rather than by branch name. This will make it easier to update the manual as branch responsibilities change.

Repetitive and motherhood information included in old policies has been eliminated in most cases, including information under the old headings of Definitions, Procedures, and Responsibilities. Most branches have program manuals containing procedures and responsibilities, so the *Ministry Policy Manual* will **no longer include this data**.

Current Status of Manual

This edition of the new *Ministry Policy Manual* is evolving as many policies are still in the process of being drafted, edited, and approved. New and updated policies will be published by Information Systems Branch as they

become available.

If you need policy information which is not yet a part of this manual, please contact the appropriate branch or program section for guidance.

Developing Policy

Policy Criteria

The following criteria should be used to determine what subject areas require policies, and the contents of the policies:

Is significant: The policy must have a significant impact on Ministry operations or administration, or be of significant interest to Ministry staff for the foreseeable future. Policy relating to situations that are unlikely to reoccur, or whose significance will likely diminish over time, should not be included.

Is of broad interest: The policy should apply to, or be of interest to, two or more functional areas within the Ministry. Information that is of interest to staff within one functional area only should be included in program manuals.

Sets out rules only: The policy must establish general or specific rules or guidelines for Ministry staff to follow, **not** procedures or responsibilities.

Is useful: The policy should be useful and not self-evident to the average reader (i.e., avoid motherhood statements).

Policy Format and Contents

To ensure that Ministry policies are communicated in a consistent manner, all policy statements will use the following three main headings:

- Scope
- Policy
- References

Scope: Describes the contents of the policy in one or two sentences. The intent is to clarify for the reader what the policy covers. If the scope of application of the policy is restricted, the scope will be briefly described. If the title includes a technical term, the meaning of the term will be briefly defined.

Policy: Sets out Ministry policy. The first paragraph will provide a summary statement of the policy. Following paragraphs will provide additional relevant detail. Second-level headings that describe the content of sections of the policy are encouraged. A third level of heading may also be used if necessary. Sub-headings under *Policy* should be short and descriptive.

References: Lists sources of information alphabetically, including acts and regulations (with section numbers, if appropriate), Ministry program manuals, and other related documents.

To ensure that policies remain current and do not need to be revised frequently, the following types of information should be avoided:

- personal names (position titles are acceptable)
- addresses or telephone numbers

- specific costs or fees (if necessary, these should published on a separate fee schedule)
- specific reporting relationships
- topics covered by collective agreements

Policy contents should be organized **top down** starting with an overall general statement and working down to specific details covering:

- situations in which the policy applies
- purpose or background
- details of how the policy is applied
- definitions of key terms
- general responsibility for implementing the policy

To ensure that policies provide a concise summary that is useful to all Ministry staff without being burdened with information that is more appropriate for Ministry program manuals, the following should be avoided:

- procedures for implementing the policy
- definitions of commonly understood terms
- detailed responsibilities for implementing the policy
- descriptions of forms and approval processes
- appendices

Procedure documentation will not be included in the policy manual. Branches are responsible for ensuring current procedures are included in branch procedure manuals.

Development and Revision Process

Ministry policies, whether new or revised, will be developed using the same process, outlined below. The Information Systems Branch is responsible for the coordination, publication, and maintenance of Ministry policies.

The Branch Director responsible for the function covered by the policy will develop or revise a policy. However, any staff member may initiate a new policy or generate a revision by contacting the responsible Branch Director.

The Branch Director, or subordinate technical specialist, will prepare a draft statement of the policy in the standard format, for approval-in-principle by the Deputy Minister or Assistant Deputy Minister to whom the Branch Director reports.

Once approved-in-principle, the responsible Branch Director will forward the draft to the Information Systems Branch, which is responsible for:

- editing, in consultation with the originators, for clarity, conciseness, and completeness
- ensuring conformity to format specifications
- word processing and printing on policy letterhead (DM approval copy)
- determining the appropriate placement within the manual

Once returned to the Branch Director, the draft policy will be circulated to all interested parties, including officials in other ministries, central agencies, special interest groups and organizations, and other branches with an interest in the policy. If there are legal issues which need to be considered,

the draft will be forwarded to Legal Services for review. Reviewers will be given a maximum of one month to return the draft with comments/approval.

The responsible Branch Director makes appropriate changes based on the review comments, sends the policy to the Information Systems Branch for final editing, and forwards a final copy for review by the Assistant Deputy Minister and Executive. Policies must be signed by the Deputy Minister to take effect.

The Deputy Minister returns the signed policy to the appropriate director who in turn forwards it to Information Systems Branch for publication.

The director responsible will take whatever steps are required to ensure that the appropriate people, both inside and outside the Ministry, are aware of the policy. This may include issuing bulletins or press releases, holding press conferences, and publishing public notices. These should be coordinated through Public Affairs Branch. The responsible director will also ensure that adequate training sessions for managers and supervisors are conducted to communicate the background, rationale, and application of the policy. Please direct your questions on the content of a policy to the responsible branch.

Writing Style

Ministry policy must be written clearly and concisely, and be understandable to all users.

Technical language and acronyms should be used sparingly and only to the extent necessary to explain the policy. Acronyms should be spelled out the first time they are used. Definitions of technical terms and acronyms should be included where appropriate.

Most policies need some flexibility in their application, so they should not be rigidly worded. It is the function of Ministry procedures manuals and program manuals to interpret policies to fit the variety of circumstances in which they will be applied.

Policy Publication and Maintenance

The Information Systems Branch will publish the Ministry Policy Manual via the Web.

The branch indicated on the policy in the *Responsible Branch* box indicates who is responsible for ensuring that the policy remains current and complete. Questions relating to a specific policy should be referred to the responsible branch.

At a minimum, Branch Directors should review annually all policies for which they are responsible.

Evaluation

This manual is for your use. We welcome your comments and suggestions on how to improve its use and readability. Please direct your comments to the Information Systems Branch, Attention: Manager, Planning.

References

No applicable references.

Chapter 1 - External Relations
Table of Contents

Contents

1.1 News Media Relations
1.2 Forest Service Emblem
1.3 Responding to Requests for Information
1.4 Printed Materials *(to be developed)*
1.5 Demonstrations and Occupation of Ministry Property (Ministry staff only)

Scope

This policy statement establishes guidelines for Ministry staff at all levels in providing the news media with information best suited to the needs of the media and their audiences.

Policy

The Ministry will release information to the news media to aid in public awareness and understanding of either the province's forest and range resources or the policies and programs of the Ministry.

Requests for Information

The Ministry will respond fully, accurately, and promptly to requests for information.

Any Ministry staff member who has relevant training and current work experience in the subject under discussion may respond to questions from the news media.

Responses must be limited to statements of fact and interpretation of Ministry policy. Personal opinions must be avoided.

Ministry staff will consult their supervisor if a request for information is:

- beyond the individual's area of competence
- beyond the individual's level of authority
- about a sensitive or potentially contentious issue

A Branch Director or Regional or District Manager may direct that certain enquiries be handled by other specified spokespersons.

Any requests for information may be referred to the Director, Public Affairs Branch, when the person receiving the enquiry is uncertain as to how to respond.

Requests for information received by the Public Affairs Branch may be referred to other sources for reply when this is most expedient.

The Director, Public Affairs Branch will provide instruction and guidance in techniques for effective communication with the media to ensure that accurate information is provided to the media and that the position of the Ministry is properly presented.

News Releases

A news release is information issued on Government news release letterhead or identified as a news release from the Ministry of Forests. All Ministry news releases must be approved by the Director, Public Affairs Branch, the Minister's office, and the Government Communications Office.

References

No applicable references.

Scope

This policy covers the use of the Forest Service emblem throughout the Ministry.

Policy

The official emblem of the Forest Service is the "Forest Service Oval" (see Appendix). It is to be used only in conjunction with the Provincial Government Visual Identity Program, or for the exclusive personal use of Ministry employees to foster an "esprit de corps" and provide a symbolic means of identification of the British Columbia Forest Service for its members.

Uses

All applications for use of the emblem must be approved by the Deputy Minister and the Public Affairs Branch, prior to use.

Use of the emblem should not conflict with the use of the Provincial Coat of Arms, as indicated by the Government Visual Identity Program.

All applications of the "Forest Service Oval" will reflect the best interests of the Forest Service and the Ministry of Forests.

References

- *Ministry of Forests Act*, RSBC 1979, s.1(3)(a)
- Province of British Columbia Visual Identity Program, *General Manual*.

Appendix
"Forest Service
Oval"

Scope

This policy covers guidelines and responsibilities on how to respond to requests for information.

Policy

Ministry of Forests staff must make every reasonable effort to assist applicants and respond openly, accurately, and completely to their requests.

The public has a legal right to access records in the custody or under the control of the Ministry of Forests and public bodies which fall under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Forests as stated in Schedule 2 of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (the Act). The legislation contains exceptions to the right of disclosure that are specific and limited.

Individuals have a legal right of access to and a right to correction of personal information about themselves under the Act. As well, individuals have a right to protection of their personal information from unauthorized collection, use, and disclosure by government.

Application

This policy does not in any way replace existing avenues for gaining access to public records. In many cases, information requested is already routinely released by the Ministry.

This policy applies to all records in the custody or under the control of the Ministry of Forests as well as the following public bodies listed in Schedule 2 of the Act including:

- Appeal Boards (*Forest Act* and *Range Act*)
- B.C. Forest Research Advisory Committee
- Carmanah Valley Forest Management Advisory Committee
- Chip Export Advisory Committee
- First Nations Forestry Council
- Forest Research Council
- Forest Resources Commission
- Forest Sector Strategy Committee
- Timber Export Advisory Committee

Requests for Information

Staff should assist applicants to define the scope of requests. This approach may save staff many hours of work and provide the applicant with much better results.

There are two methods for gaining access to public records:

1. routine channels
2. formal requests under the Act

A formal request under the Act is the avenue of last resort.

Routine Channels
The Ministry has set up routine channels for the release of information available without a request. This type of information includes:

- Answers to questions where the individual is not seeking access to a record. Staff should continue to refer questions to the appropriate program area for response.

- Government publications or automated information services such as BC On-Line. Publications are available for purchase from an authorized government distributor or bookstores. Copies of many government publications are available in public libraries.

- Records available without a request. Certain records in the custody or under the control of the Ministry will be identified as routinely releasable either because no exceptions apply or because the Minister feels that in spite of the discretionary exception, the Ministry would routinely exercise discretion in favour of disclosure.

Formal Requests
Where information is not available through routine channels, the Act provides:

- formal requests are to be processed within 30 calendar days, except where circumstances allow for extended time limit
- a duty of the Ministry to assist applicants
- a mandatory line-by-line review of requested records
- a right to review Ministry decisions by an independent Information and Privacy Commissioner

Formal requests, which must be submitted in writing, should be referred to the FOI Contact in your office. Ministry staff should refer to *Guidelines for Responding to Requests for Information* in the Appendix of this policy.

Fees
The Ministry charges fees for responding to requests for information in accordance with legislation and regulations. Where fees are to be collected, a fee estimate must be provided to the applicant before staff begin acting on the request. In cases of large requests, staff may choose to collect half the fee estimate before acting on the request.

Exceptions to Disclosure

In responding to formal requests, the information is releasable unless an

exception to disclosure in the Act applies. The common sense approach in dealing with a request for information to which exceptions may or do apply is to ask the question: Is it reasonable to expect that harm would result if the information in question were released? That is, would release of requested information reasonably be expected to harm, for instance, the financial or economic interest of a public body or the business interests of a third party?

The following criteria should be considered in determining harm under the Act. Harm should be:

- specific (capable of precise expression),
- current (either immediate or in the foreseeable future), and
- probable (reasonable likelihood, not merely hypothetical possibility)

With respect to a request for information about another person, the harm test to be applied is: Would disclosing the personal information be an unreasonable invasion of a third party's personal privacy?

Mandatory Exceptions

Some information must not be released under the Act. Such information falls under exceptions to disclosures that are mandatory. The following must not be released:

Cabinet Confidences

- information that would reveal the deliberations of Cabinet or any of its committees, including advice, recommendations, policy considerations, draft legislation, or regulations. (Section 12)

Business Interests of a Third Party

- information harmful to the business interests of a third party. This information must be withheld if all three of the following conditions are met:

    1. disclosure would reveal trade secrets or commercial, financial, labour relations, scientific, or technical information of a third party, and

    2. the information was supplied in confidence, and

    3. disclosure could reasonably be expected to harm significantly the competitive position, or interfere with the negotiating position of the third party. (Section 21)

However, even if all three conditions are met, the third party must be notified and may consent to release the information.

Personal Privacy

- a third party's personal information unless that person consents to release. (Section 22)

Personal information, which is protected under the Act, is defined as recorded information about an identifiable individual, including:

- the individual's name, address, or telephone number
- the individual's race, national or ethnic origin, colour, or religious or political beliefs or associations
- the individual's age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, or family status
- an identifying number, symbol, or other particular assigned to the individual
- the individual's fingerprints, blood type, or inheritable characteristics
- information about the individual's health care history, including a physical or mental disability
- information about the individual's educational, financial, criminal, or employment history
- anyone else's opinions about the individual, and
- the individual's personal views or opinions, except if they are about someone else. (Note: Individual A's personal views or opinions of Individual B constitute the personal information of Individual B, under the Act)

Personal information must not be released to anyone other than the individual the information is about, unless the Act provides for disclosure [See Sections 22(4), 33, 35, 36].

Discretionary Exceptions

Some information may or may not be released under the Act. Such information falls under exceptions to disclosure that are discretionary. The head of the public body is expected to exercise discretion under the Act to decide whether to release or withhold the information. The following may or may not be released:

- information that would reveal advice or recommendations developed by or for a public body. This exception does not apply to factual information, public opinion polls, statistical surveys, appraisals, economic forecasts, environmental impact statements, or technical studies. (Section 13)
- information that is subject to solicitor/client privilege (Section 14)
- information that could reasonably be expected to harm a law enforcement matter, harm the security of any property or system, etc. (Section 15)
- information that could reasonably be expected to harm intergovernmental relations or negotiations (Section 16)

- information that could reasonably be expected to harm the financial interests of a public body (Section 17)
- information that could reasonably be expected to harm the conservation of heritage sites (Section 18)
- information that could reasonably be expected to harm individual or public safety (Section 19)
- information that is to be published or released within 60 days (Section 20)

Considerations in Release

Requested information must be reviewed carefully by staff trained to apply the Act. Although it may be judged releasable under one exception, another exception may apply.

The Minister of Forests (Deputy Minister or designate) must disclose to the public, without delay, any information which the Minister feels is in the public interest, whether or not a request is made. The information may be about a risk of significant harm to the environment or to the health or safety of the public or a group of people. (Section 25)

References

- *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (Bill 50)
- *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Amendment Act, 1993 (Bill 62)*
- *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Policy and Procedure Manual*
- *Management Services Program Business Plan* (May 1, 1993 through April 30, 1996)
- *Management Services Program Draft Auction Plans 1993/94*

Appendix — Guidelines for Responding to Information Requests

The following alphabetical lists are intended to guide staff in responding to a request for information. They include a variety of information subjects or types commonly requested.

In many cases, the information may be released without further deliberation. If not, staff should tell the requester a written request is required.

If the information requested is common to two or more ministries, e.g., an annual report, it is listed in the General Information section.

Staff who are unsure how to proceed with a request after referring to the policy are urged to check promptly with their FOI Contact or the Information and Privacy Section (387-2227). Sections of the Act that may apply for each type of information are also listed. Please note that these lists, as well as the relevant sections of the Act, are not all inclusive.

All records regarding the tendering and awarding of contracts and disclosure of purchase, including Requests for Proposals, Bids, Public Tenders, their evaluations, and pertinent correspondence are listed under Contracts in the General Information list below.

General Information

Release

- Annual reports: Ministry and branch-approved; sold through Crown Publications and in some cases, by branches
- Backgrounders: published background information on issues, often released with news releases
- Contractors and consultants: lists of, including names, addresses, and phone numbers
- Contracts: award letters
- Contracts: bidders' meeting minutes
- Contracts: cancellation of
- Contracts: evaluation of each bid, proposal, tender (after contract signed)
- Contracts: evaluation criteria weightings
- Contracts: Invitation to Quote, Request for Proposals, Public Tender (anytime)
- Contracts: list of companies who bid (after contract signed)
- Contracts: list of bidders invited (after contract signed)
- Contracts: summary of evaluations of bids, proposals, tenders (after contract signed)
- Co-operative Management Agreements (after contract signed)
- Daily scale book
- Five-year Forest and Range Resource program (final copy)
- Harvest history data: quantity of timber cut by given company, etc.
- Harvest volume and lumber production in particular areas of the province: number of mills operating, what access they have to timber, etc.
- House Briefing notes published in the Hansard Blues
- List of tree farm licences and who holds them
- Manuals of the Ministry (for sale either through Crown Publications or

individual branches)
- Maps, aerial photos
- News releases
- Policy and procedures, regulations (approved)
- Polls and surveys
- Stumpage rates for a specific cutting authority (Timber Mark)
- Timber supply analyses
- Trespass violations and stumpage fees/penalties charged (release when appeal process is completed)

Get Written Request
- Appeal decisions under the *Forest Act* and *Range Act:* e.g., appeals re scaling, stumpage, licence cancellation, etc. (Sect. 22)
- Audit reports: Audit Services Branch audits, financial reviews, audit forester reports, technical reviews, etc. (Sect. 17, 21, 22)
- Budget working papers, including development packages (Sect. 17)
- Contracts: bidders correspondence and responses (after contract signed) (Sect. 21, 22)
- Contracts: bids, proposals, tenders (including information such as methodology that arises form research) (Sect. 21, 22)
- Contracts: briefing note recommending contract award (after contract signed) (Sect. 13)
- Contracts: evaluation committee members' notes and memoranda (after contract signed) (Sect. 13, 17)
- Contracts: negotiation information (after contract signed) (Sect. 13, 17, 21)
- Contracts: requisition (after contract signed) (Sect. 13, 17)
- Contracts: signed contract or purchase order (after contract signed) (Sect. 17, 21, 22)
- Contracts: unit prices (Sect. 17, 21)
- Legal advice provided to Ministry; communications between Ministry and its lawyers (Sect. 14)
- Performance grading of consultants (e.g., poor, good, excellent) that may include information about an individual's capability (Sect. 22)
- Policy and procedures (Sect. 16, 17)
- Revenue enforcement: audit inspections, etc. (Sect. 21)
- Scale and royalty invoices (Sect. 21)
- Scaling information: scale returns, measurement of logs, revenue check scales performed by Ministry staff, etc. (Sect. 21)
- Stumpage rates: information on the calculation of rates for a company requested by a third party (Sect. 21)

Economics and Trade Information

Release
- Lists of all processing facilities in the province (free, would include some of the mills on the Small Business Enterprise Program list)
- Silviculture cost statement: average silviculture costs in an area of BC

Get Written Request

- Chip Export Advisory Committee (CEAC) submissions to Ministry executive or Cabinet (Sect. 12, 13, 17)
- Job Protection Commission (independent group that looks at companies in financial trouble; files contain financial information on companies) (Sect. 21)
- Softwood Lumber Countervailing Duty Action information (Sect. 12, 13, 16, 17)
- Timber Export Advisory Committee (TEAC) submissions to Ministry executive or Cabinet (Sect. 12, 13, 17)

Financial Services Information

Release

- Budget instructions, approved budgets as shown in the Estimates

Get Written Request

- Accounts payable (Sect. 21)
- Accounts receivable: collection data, encumbrances, set-offs, write-offs (Sect. 21)
- Budget allocations, reallocations, FTE projections (Sect. 17)
- Budget working papers (Sect. 17)
- Company operating data, credit information (Sect. 21)
- Payroll
- Security: loss investigation reports, case files (Sect. 21, 22)
- Treasury Board submissions: submission information, special warrants, pre-approvals (Sect. 12, 13, 17)

Human Resources Information

Release

- Grievance file (employees seeking access to their own files following final decision)
- Position classification (e.g. deputy minister, executive positions)
- Position description
- References: information requested by a prospective employer about an employee where that information was discussed by the employee and Ministry personnel in the performance planning process
- Staffing levels in area to be reorganized: number of FTEs, etc.

Get Written Request

- Appeal, classification (employees seeking access to their own files prior to final decision)
- Grievance file (employees seeking access to their own labour relations grievance files prior to final decision) (Sect. 22)
- Negotiated entitlements to affected employee (requested by a third party) (Sect. 22)
- Panel members' notes on applicant, written during competition
- Personal information on another person (Sect. 22)
- Questions and sample answers from a competition

- Rehabilitation list (names of employees on the list)
- Verification of employment (usually a financial institution seeking confirmation of employee's status and approximate salary)

Inventory Information

Release

- Computer digital files on disk or cassette (marketable information is sold in this form; cost schedule is being determined)
- Computer digital file information in hard copy form

Protection Information

Release

- Burning permits
- Direct fire costs to date
- List of companies that submit tenders
- List of contractors
- Staffing levels on fires

Get Written Request

- Consultants' reports (may contain third party information) (Sect. 21)
- Cost of North American Forestry Commission international exchange programs (may contain information that if released could harm intergovernmental relations) (Sect. 16)
- Fire Audit (Sect. 21)
- Memorandum of Understanding with other countries (Sect. 16)
- Smoke management plan: estimate of damage (Sect. 17, 21)
- Strategic fire control plan: estimated cost and approach in putting out fire that has escaped initial attack (Sect. 21)

Range Information

Release

- Appeal or objection of tenure award
- Grazing permits and licences: information on number of livestock for a given period eating a given amount of forage
- Hay cutting permit (to harvest hay on a specified area)
- Range inspection reports from Crown tenures

Get Written Request

- Application for grazing permit or licence (may contain financial information that would fall under personal information category) (Sect. 22)
- Application for hay cutting permit or licence (may contain information that would fall under personal information) (Sect. 22)

Recreation Information

Release

- Map brochures
- Protected Areas Strategy Document (published)
- Reports, technical

Get Written Request

- Protected Areas Strategy files (containing third party information or legal opinions) (Sect. 14, 21)

Research Information

Release

- Information such as seed sources accompanying plant materials (cuttings, scions)
- Publications: routinely released information
- Reports: progress and final, containing technical and research information

Get Written Request

- Data used in research by the branch where providers, including researchers and co-operatives, have secured agreements with the branch that the information and source would not be released (Sect. 21)
- Data compiled by researchers (Sect. 17)

Silviculture Information

Release

- Contract: Camp Standards (Schedule D outlines minimum standards, assessments for infractions, etc.)
- Contract, Silviculture: award letter, general agreement, conditions of agreement with contractor, cancellation of contract letter
- Contract, Silviculture: Summary of Tenders Received
- Contract, Tree Planting: Schedule A (terms and conditions)
- Pre-harvest Silviculture Prescription

Get Written Request

- Contract, Tree Planting: Schedule B (schedule contains specifics on stock type, spacing, number of trees, etc.) Unit price information not to be automatically released. (Sect. 21)
- Contract, Tree Planting: tender form. Unit price information not to be automatically released. (Sect. 21)

Timber Harvesting Information

Release

- Applications for authorization to harvest and agreements to harvest Crown timber as listed in Section 10 of the *Forest Act*; the agreements include:
  a) forest licence
  b) timber sale licence
  c) timber licence
  d) tree farm licence
  e) pulpwood agreement
  f) woodlot licence
  g) free use permit
  h) licence to cut

i) road permit
j) Christmas tree permit
k) cutting permit

- Apportionment and commitment listings: breakdown of the allowable annual cut within a timber supply area
- Cut control figures in cut control letters (30 days after letter mailed to licensee)
- Cut control letters
- Development Plan: first stage of operational planning at the resource development planning stage; identifies specific plans of the licensee for the next five year period.
- Five-year performance information
- Forest Timber Administration System print-outs relating to cutting permits (tracking Forest Tenure information)
- Inspection reports of harvesting and road management activities after District Manager has approved of release of report (Sect. 17, 21)
- Lists of equipment operators which Ministry hires for building roads
- Logging Plan: information sent by companies to forest districts when requesting cutting permits
- Management Plan: document required by TFL and forest licence agreements; contains information on how the licensee plans to manage the area over five-year period.

Get Written Request

- Correspondence between licensee and Ministry re cutting permit (tracking of licence) (Sect. 21)
- Estimated and actual costs for road or entire construction project
- Letters/memos from within the Ministry and between the Ministry and licensees. (Sect. 13, 17, 21, or other exceptions may apply)
- Property acquisitions for Ministry purposes, e.g., road right-of-way acquisitions, letter of offer to landowner, appraisal of land including such information as comparable sales in recent market, etc. (Sect. 17, 21)

Small Business Forest Enterprise Program Information

Release

- District business plan (budget information for small businesses)
- Licence documents (timber sale licences)
- List of companies which submitted tenders
- List of registrants in SBFEP (lists or partial lists may be sold)
- Reports: district quarterly (volume of wood sold and billed), monthly status, monthly review
- Reports: monthly status (financial information)

Valuation Information

Release

- Appraisal Data Sheet: summary of calculations on the appraisal worksheet (description of timber)
- Appraisal Worksheets: location of cutting areas, inspection, miles of roads; submitted by licensee
- Cruise data

- Stumpage: collection history (general information on whether a company's account is in good order)
- Volumes or billings for specific timber mark, for specified period
- Work Progress Plan: part of Silviculture contract containing work area, beginning and completion dates, number of workers, etc.

Get Written Request

- Market value information. This information is supplied by companies as required by the *Forest Act* (s.149). The Ministry provides summary data which does not reveal the sources of information. [Sect. 21(1)]
- Timber appraisal information
- Licensee woods (logging) cost survey
- Licensee milling cost survey

Chapter 2 - Program Audit
Table of Contents

Contents

2.1 Internal Audit
2.2 Program Auditing and Monitoring *(to be developed)*

Scope

This policy covers internal audit within the Ministry of Forests.

Policy

The Ministry will be subject to an independent and objective regular examination of all programs and activities by Audit Services Branch from a management, operational, and financial perspective.

Internal audit is distinct from the monitoring and review functions performed by branches, regions, and districts as part of their regular ongoing management of programs. These activities are not internal auditing and are excluded from the scope of this policy.

Role of Internal Audit

Internal audit assists managers in carrying out their responsibilities. It does this through evaluating and reporting upon the management of Ministry programs and activities as well as providing practical advice to Ministry staff on other matters (e.g., policy development). The scope of audit is broad and may include:

- determining the integrity of information generated
- reviewing management's processes for planning, delivering, and reporting on program activity
- reviewing compliance with legislation, policies, and procedures
- evaluating the economy and efficiency with which allocated resources are used
- determining whether goals and objectives have been met

All internal audits will be conducted by or under the direction, knowledge, or guidance of Audit Services Branch.

Accountability

Audit Services Branch is accountable to the Ministry Audit Committee, comprising all Executive Committee members, for the delivery of an effective audit program. An annual plan and report summarizing audit activity will be approved by the Audit Committee.

Planning

All potential audits will be identified in a master plan that should be completed over a 5-year cycle. An audit plan is then developed each year by Audit Services Branch that incorporates input from management across the Ministry. Audits may also be initiated throughout the year upon the written request of management.

Reporting

There will be ongoing communication between Audit Services and management during an audit. A draft report will be discussed with managers prior to a final report being issued. Reports will enable managers to assess the implications of the audit findings and take appropriate action. Only significant matters will be reported.

Draft reports will be issued within 30 days of fieldwork completion and final reports will be issued 30 days later.

The Audit Committee will be provided with the executive summary from each audit report.

Management's Responsibility

Management will ensure that appropriate corrective action is taken to address audit findings. Management is responsible for determining the extent of action to be taken.

For all audit reports, a detailed action plan that addresses the report's recommendations will be requested by, and submitted to, the appropriate Regional Manager, Branch Director, or Assistant Deputy Minister within 21 days of the final report being issued. Audit Services Branch will subsequently assess the extent of corrective action taken and report the results to management within 6 months.

Standards

Internal audits will be conducted according to the *Standards for Internal Auditing in the Government of British Columbia* and audit standards proclaimed by the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants and the Institute of Internal Auditors.

Exclusion

This policy does not apply to audits conducted by the Office of the Auditor General or other central agencies.

References

- *Financial Administration Operating Policy* (FAOP), Chapter 13
- *Standards for Internal Auditing in the Government of B.C.*

Contents

3.6 Financial Signing Authority
3.9 Business Meeting Expenses
3.10 Budget Management
3.11 Credit Management *(to be developed)*
3.12 Contract Management

Scope

This policy defines the standards for exercising authority to receive goods and services, to spend, to make payments from legislatively approved funds, and to ensure that public money is accounted for.

Policy

The Ministry recognizes five types of financial signing authority: receiving, general spending, restricted spending, payment, and revenue.

Receiving Authority

Receiving authority must be exercised by the individual with the best knowledge of the goods or services being received. If this individual is normally the spending authority, the supervisor will perform the spending authority certification.

Where it is not possible or appropriate for goods or services to be received by a Ministry employee, receiving authority may be exercised by non-Ministry employees (such as contractors, fire crews, and statutory term workers), as long as the responsibility centre ensures that they have the knowledge to do so.

Receiving Authority Responsibilities:

Receiving authorities must ensure that:

- goods are received as described and in good condition
- satisfactory contract performance has been demonstrated when receiving services

Spending Authority

General spending authority is delegated by the Deputy Minister to certain positions, depending on their organizational and budgetary responsibilities. Spending authorities are authorized to initiate and approve expenditures within their budget.

General spending authorities may exercise this authority against their own allotment to a maximum of the uncommitted balance, subject to:

- any dollar limits or other restrictions imposed by the responsibility centre manager
- Ministry and Central Agency restrictions

When the spending authority is the payee (such as for travel vouchers), the spending authority functions is exercised by the authority's supervisor. The only exception will be for Regional and District Managers, who will designate one individual to sign when the manager is the payee.

A responsibility centre manager may designate a backup to sign in periods of absence. This designation must be documented. In the absence of the designated backup, the spending authority must be exercised by the spending authority's supervisor.

Spending Authority Responsibilities:

Spending authorities must ensure that:

- all relevant policies and procedures are complied with (including regulations and operational statutes, Treasury Board directives)
- the receiving authority has sufficient knowledge to receive the goods or services
- the price charged is according to the contract or agreement (or, if not specified, is reasonable)
- any advance payments are specifically provided for in the contract or agreement (or, if not specified, are reasonable)
- for contracts, recommendations are made to the payment authority for the release of holdbacks or securities, as appropriate
- payments plus commitments do not exceed the relevant budgetary allocation
- expenditures are relevant to program or activity objectives
- the invoice has not been paid, in whole or in part
- the invoice is complete and all supporting documentation is present
- all coding is complete and all supporting documentation is present
- the account number is correct

Restricted Spending Authority

Restricted spending authority is delegated by the Deputy Minister for special purposes. (For example, restricted spending authority against the Fire Suppression Vote can only be exercised against assigned fires.) Restricted spending authorities have the same functions and responsibilities as general spending authorities.

Payment Authority

Payment authority is delegated by the Deputy Minister to specific Finance and Administration positions responsible for requisitioning payments.

Payment authority must not be exercised unless valid spending authority and receiving authority signatures appear on supporting documentation for the transaction.

Payment authority and spending authority must not be exercised by the same individual for an individual payment, even if the officer has both authorities.

Payment Authority Responsibilities:

Payment authorities must ensure that:

- all relevant policies and procedures are complied with (including regulations and operational statutes, Treasury Board directives)
- an appropriate expenditure code is identified on the invoice by the spending authority
- appropriate certifications are provided by officers with receiving authority and spending authority over those funds
- all information appearing on payment requisitions is complete and accurate
- where a Crown debt has been assigned or a power of attorney is in force, the payment is requisitioned in favour of the assignee or individual having power of attorney
- a higher authority is advised in cases where a payment would be invalid
- any other procedures necessary in relation to the payment are carried out
- payment will not be made to an agent without the written authority of the principal

Revenue Authority

Revenue authority is delegated by the Deputy Minister to specific positions responsible for the control of public money. Individuals delegated revenue authority are not authorized to receive public money.

Individuals with the authority to issue invoices may not be delegated the authority to approve credit notes, authorize refunds or set-offs, or write off debts.

Revenue Authority Responsibilities:

The revenue authority must ensure that:

- all relevant policies and procedures are complied with (including regulations and operational statutes, Treasury Board directives)
- all revenues are claimed, received, recorded and guarded against loss, fraud or omission

Responsibility Centre Manager

Responsibility Centre Manager Responsibilities:

The Responsibility Centre Manager:

- recommends delegation of authority and must ensure that signing authority specimen signature cards are current
- is responsible for ensuring signing authorities are in compliance with policies and procedures and any deviations are reported to the Signing Authority Officer.

References

- *Expenditure and Revenue Management Procedure Manuals*
- *Financial Administration Act*
- *Financial Administration Operating Policy Manual* (FAOP), s.3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 9.1, 9.3, 11.4
- *Financial Administration Procedures Manual* (FAPRO), s.3A

Scope

This policy defines the standards established by government policy for business meeting expenses that may be charged to the Ministry.

Policy

Business meeting expenses may be charged to the Ministry provided that:

- the expenses are necessary for conducting government business
- the expenses are reasonable and in accordance with travel per diem rates established by the Treasury Board and union agreements
- the nature of the expenses are consistent with the government policy on *Standards of Conduct* for employees

A summary of allowable business expenses is provided in table form on the last page of this policy.

Human Resource events (e.g., Reward and Recognition, Safety Awards) are not included in the scope of this policy.

Prior Approval for Expenses

All expenses associated with a business meeting must be included in an application for approval (*Business Expense Approval Form*, FIN 215). The only exception is expenses for employee travel which should be submitted on a *Travel Voucher* (FIN 10).

Approval must be obtained before a commitment or expenditure is made or the meeting is held.

Spending authorities must clearly identify the nature of the costs on the approval form (particularly meal costs, and if allowable, alcohol costs).

Business Meeting Accommodation

Teleconferencing and video-conferencing shall be considered before arranging meeting room facilities.

Government-owned facilities, as listed by the Travel Smart Program of the Purchasing Commission shall be utilized prior to seeking private meeting facilities if a meeting room is required.

The Purchasing Commission's *Business Travel Guide* shall be used to find a Business Meeting Centre if a private meeting facility is required. Total costs, including transportation, accommodation, meeting room rentals, meals, and audio/visual equipment and other meeting expenses, shall be considered when selecting a meeting location.

Where meeting costs are anticipated to exceed $1,000 (excluding transportation costs) a bid request shall be issued to a minimum of three

Business Meeting Centres listed in the Purchasing Commission's *Business Travel Guide*.

Headquarters Meetings

Meals inside headquarters (for meeting participants) are business meeting expenses and must be approved in accordance with this policy.

Business Meeting Classes

There are three classes of business meetings:

Class I: provincial or ministry-hosted meetings primarily involving government organizations and employees.

Class II: provincial or ministry-hosted meetings with organizations and individuals outside of government.

Class III: provincially-hosted functions arranged and sponsored by the Ministry of Government Services, such as Long Service Award ceremonies, and visits from the Royal Family or heads of state.

Approval Authority

Business meeting expenses will be approved in advance by the appropriate approval authority. The approval authorities are delegated by the Deputy Minister to specific positions and restricted to dollar limits. These authorities are outlined in the Expenditure Management Manual.

Class I Business Discussions

Class I business discussions are provincial or ministry-hosted meetings primarily involving government organizations and employees.

Business Meals: When a business meeting does not adjourn for the meal period, meals brought into the meeting are an allowable expense.

Where food service facilities are not readily available:

- refreshments (coffee, tea, juice) and light snacks (muffins, doughnuts) may be served for meetings of four hours or longer
- refreshments only may be served for meetings of less than four hours

Meal expenses incurred in a restaurant will not normally be an allowable expense, particularly if only public servants are involved. These meal expenses will only be approved in extraordinary circumstances.

Alcohol: Alcohol is not an allowable expense.

Spouses: Expenses for spouses are not allowable.

Employee Retirement/Transfer: Functions for employee retirement or transfer (to another ministry) are not allowable expenses.

Class II Business Discussions

Class II business discussions are meetings with individuals or persons

associated with other governments or private sector organizations.

Business Meals: When it is not practical to bring food into the meeting, business discussions may continue away from the meeting area during the meal period.

Meals associated with meetings of business organizations related to government business (e.g., BC Wildlife Federation, Council of Forest Industries) are allowable expenses if attendance is required by the employee's supervisor.

Alcohol: Alcohol is an allowable expense in exceptional circumstances. On occasions where wine will be provided, it is government policy to serve British Columbia wine.

Spouses: Expenses for spouses are not allowable.

Employee Retirement/Transfer: Functions for employee retirement or transfer (to another ministry) are not allowable expenses.

Class II Hosting Events

For the purpose of this policy, hosting events are program-related protocol events. Class II hosting events are those which host federal or provincial counterparts or foreign government missions or delegations.

Business Meals: All meals and receptions are allowable expenses.

Alcohol: Alcohol is an allowable expense when served with formal meals (lunch and dinner) and formal receptions. On occasions where wine will be provided, it is government policy to serve British Columbia wine.

Spouses: Expenses for spouses may be allowed if the spouse is formally representing the government. Written invitations must be approved in advance by the Deputy Minister.

Employee Retirement/Transfer: Functions for employee retirement or transfer (to another ministry) are not allowable expenses.

Class III Hosting Events

Class III hosting events are provincially-hosted protocol functions arranged and sponsored by the Ministry of Government Services. They include such events as Long Service Award ceremonies, and visits from the Royal Family or heads of state.

Business Meals: All meals and receptions are allowable expenses.

Alcohol: Alcohol is an allowable expense when served with formal meals (lunch and dinner) and formal receptions. On occasions where wine will be provided, it is government policy to serve British Columbia wine.

Spouses: Expenses for spouses may be allowed if the spouse is formally representing the government. Written invitations must be approved in

advance by the Deputy Minister. The Ministry of Forests will pay for approved spousal expenses.

Employee Retirement/Transfer: Expenses for occasions specifically provided for in personnel policy issued by the Public Service Employee Relations Commission are allowable (e.g., Long Service Awards ceremonies).

References

- *Expenditure Management Procedures Manual*
- *Financial Administration Procedures Manual* (FAPRO), s.4
- *General Management Operating Policy* (GMOP), s.7
- Ministry Policy Manual, Revenue and Corporate Services, 5.4, *Rewards and Recognition*
- *Standards of Conduct Policy, Public Service Employee Relations Commission (PSERC)*
- *Purchasing Commission's Business Travel Guide*

Business Meeting Expenses Policy Summary

Business meeting expenses may be charged to the Ministry provided that:

- the expenses are necessary for conducting government business
- the expenses are reasonable and in accordance with travel per diem rates established by the Treasury Board and union agreements
- the nature of the expenses are consistent with the government policy, *Standards of Conduct*.

	Class I	Class II	Class III
Guidelines	Generally, meetings of government employees. Examples: — inter-ministry committees or negotiations — training seminars — meetings of ministry division heads — executive meetings — advisory group meetings which may include non-government employees	Generally, program-related meetings with non-public servants. Examples: — business discussions with persons associated with other governments — business discussions with private sector organizations or representatives — formal conferences or receptions when hosting federal or provincial counterparts or foreign government missions or delegations	Functions sponsored wholly or in part by Government Services. Examples: — visits from the Royal Family or heads of state — Long Service Award ceremonies
Approvals	Business Expense Approval Form (FIN 215)-Approval limits can be found in the Expenditure Management Manual		Wholly sponsored functions require the prior approval of the Minister of Government Services
Allowable Expenses	— refreshments if food service facilities are not readily available — food and beverage provided during the meeting if necessary to meet over the meal period — refreshments and light snacks during meeting breaks for meetings of four hours or longer — in extraordinary circumstances meal expenses incurred in a restaurant — rented or purchased utensils, coffee urns, etc. — room rental (if no government facilities are available and the meeting cannot be postponed until government facilities are available) — rental of audio-visual equipment — photocopying on-site	**Business discussions:** — food and beverage (including alcohol in exceptional circumstances) — when it is not practical to bring food into the meeting, business discussions that include meals may continue away from the meeting area during the meal period — meals associated with meetings of business organizations related to government business (e.g., BC Wildlife Federation, Council of Forest Industries) if attendance is required by the supervisor — room rental (if no government facilities are available and the meeting cannot be postponed until government facilities are available) — rental of audio-visual equipment — photocopying on-site — in exceptional circumstances, travel expenses incurred by attendees from outside government **Hosting Events** — food and beverages, including alcohol when served with formal meals (lunch and dinner) and formal receptions — rented or purchased utensils, coffee urns, etc. — room rental — rental of audio-visual equipment — photocopying on-site — in exceptional circumstances, travel expenses incurred by attendees from outside government	— food and beverages, including alcohol when served with formal meals (lunch and dinner) and formal receptions — guest speakers — rented or purchased utensils, coffee urns, etc. — room rental — rental of audio-visual equipment — photocopying on-site — in exceptional circumstances, travel expenses incurred by attendees from outside government
Non-allowable Expenses	— alcohol — expenses for spouses — expenses for retirement or transfer of government employees — generally meals expenses incurred in a restaurant, particularly if only public servants are involved	— expenses for spouses. The exception is if the spouse is formally representing the government. A written invitation must be approved by the Deputy Minister — expenses for retirement or transfer of government employees	— expenses for spouses. The exception is if the spouse is formally representing the government. A written invitation must be approved by the Deputy Minister

BRITISH COLUMBIA

MINISTRY OF FORESTS
POLICY

POLICY SUBJECT		
Budget, FTE and Performance Management		
EFFECTIVE	**RESPONSIBLE BRANCH**	**NUMBER**
01-April-05	***Financial and Management Services and Strategic Policy and Planning Branch***	***3.10***
APPROVED		

Scope

This policy provides for budget, FTE and performance management, applicable reviews and applies to all Ministry expenditures, including votes, special accounts, and other authorizations. Capital allocation and reallocations is also included in the scope of this policy.

Policy

Budget, Performance and FTE Allocations

Annual budget, performance and FTE allocations, by business area, are approved by the Deputy Minister and are formally communicated to each branch, region, and BC Timber Sales by the Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Policy and Governance Division, at the beginning of each fiscal year (i.e., April). Throughout the fiscal year, budget, performance and FTE allocations can also be authorized/changed when:

- additional resources are made available to the Ministry.
- budget freezes or reductions are imposed by Treasury Board or the Executive.

In general, assigned performance measure targets will not change during the fiscal year. However, in some cases, performance measure targets may be changed by the Deputy where published service plan goals change, or by Executive to more effectively achieve published service plan goals and objectives. These changes will normally be associated with related budget changes.

A formal record of annual high level budget allocations and performance measure targets are maintained in the Ministry's financial forecasting system (MAX). Budget allocations and FTE's are maintained by Financial and Management Services Branch and performance measure targets are maintained by Strategic Policy and Planning Branch. High level budget allocations are also maintained in the general ledger (Corporate Accounting System - CAS) at the branch, region and BCTS by Financial and Management Services Branch.

All financial and performance reporting for the Ministry Executive and senior management will be derived from the financial and performance information contained in MAX and CAS.

Budget, Performance and FTE Management Rules

Regional Managers, Branch Directors and Timber Sales Managers must ensure that budget, performance and FTE allocations to spending authorities are accurately recorded, in MAX, at the responsibility center level.

Budget, performance and FTE allocations, at the responsibility center level, must be reconciled to the high level budget, performance and FTE allocations prior to the last working day of each month. On the last working day of the month, a snapshot is taken of the budget and performance information.

All unreconciled and unreconcilable transactions should be reconciled/corrected by the last working day of the month.

Budget forecasting information must be entered into MAX by the last working day of the month. Spending authorities are responsible for ensuring that information recorded in MAX accurately reflects their expenditure decisions and plans. Performance forecasting information must be entered into MAX by the last working day of each Quarter.

- The sum of actual expenditures plus encumbrances for a division cannot exceed the budget allocation for a vote or special account without Executive approval.
- The sum of actual expenditures plus encumbrances for a region, branch, or timber sales office cannot exceed the region or branch budget allocation for a vote or special account without written approval from the appropriate Assistant Deputy Minister.
- The sum of actual expenditures plus encumbrances for a district cannot exceed the district's budget allocation for a vote or special account without written approval from the appropriate Regional Manager.
- Reported actual expenditures and encumbrances plus forecasted expenditures may exceed a budget allocation at any point in time; however, the total amount spent in a year cannot exceed an approved budget allocation without the appropriate approvals noted above.
- All adjustments to expenditures, to record at the applicable/correct service line, must be done on a quarterly basis.

Budget, Performance and FTE Reallocations

A Budget, Performance and FTE Reallocation form (FS471) shall be completed for all budget, performance and FTE reallocations, including new ministry funding approved by Treasury Board after initial allocations.

Budget, FTE, and performance target reallocations (FS471) must be received, in Financial and Management Services Branch (FMSB), prior to the 5th working day of the last day of the month to be actioned for that month. The original should be sent to FMBS, with a copy to Strategic Policy and Planning Branch (SPPB).

For transfers involving the Forest Investment Account, a copy of an approved FS 471 should also be sent to Strategic Policy and Planning Branch, FSI Section, to enable tracking and decision making by the Forest Investment Council.

For transfers within BC Timber Sales, a copy of an approved FS471 should also be sent to BCTS Headquarters to enable tracking.

Budget and FTE Reallocations:

Reallocations that would have the effect of transferring budgets between votes, between special accounts, and between votes and special accounts are not permitted.

Reallocations between Forest Investment and other business areas is not permitted.

Reallocations between Direct Fire and other business areas is not permitted.

Reallocations between capital and operating budgets are not permitted.

Reallocation of ministry targeted funding is not permitted. All surplus target funding must be reported and returned for reallocation of other ministry priorities as determined by the ministry executive.

Reallocations within and between divisions (e.g. branches, districts (including regional offices), and timber sale offices) requires the approval of the applicable branch directors, regional manager. Financial and Management Services Branch must be formally advised or transfers between regions and between regions/branches.

Performance Reallocations:

Unless additional resources or reductions are imposed by Central Agencies (e. g. Treasury Board or OCG), Corporate Performance Measure targets published in the Ministry's Service Plan on the 3rd Tuesday of February each year (as required by the Budget Transparency and Accountability Act), will not be changed during

the fiscal year, but rather the Ministry will track against the published targets. Internal Performance Measure targets may be changed by Executive throughout the year as needed to achieve service plan goals.

In keeping with the above, published Corporate Performance Measure targets may not be reallocated without approval from the Deputy Minister.

Internal Performance Measure targets assigned to Regions and Branches may only be reallocated with the approval of the appropriate ADMs who are accountable for the associated corporate objectives, strategies and Performance Measure targets published in the Service Plan.

Within the Region or the Branch, performance measure targets can be reassigned or reallocated (eg between Districts or Managers) according to Region and Branch policy.

With BC Timber Sales, performance measure targets assigned to Timber Sales Offices may only be reallocated or amended with the approval of the appropriate Director.

Monthly Financial Reviews

Districts, Timber Sales Offices, and regions and branches will review expenditures, encumbrances, and forecasts against budget allocations monthly to determine if corrective action is required to achieve the performance plan or to maintain expenditures within the budget allocation.

Ministry-wide financial reports will be prepared monthly beginning at the end of June (or as advised by the ADM, Corporate Policy and Governance Division) for review by the Executive. Reports are due to the Executive on the Friday, preceding the second Monday of the month. A year-end comparison of actual expenditures to the *Estimates*, will be provided to the ministry executive in June.

Quarterly Performance Reviews

On a quarterly basis (or as advised by the ADM, Corporate Policy and Governance Division) the financial review (as outlined above) will be done in conjunction with a Performance Review. Districts, timber sales offices, and regions and branches will review performance measure accomplishments and forecasts and provide a variance report for any significant under or over achievement expected by year-end.

Quarterly performance reports will be run by SPPB from MAX on June 30, September 30, December 31 and at year end, and provide an analysis of overall performance against the service plan to Executive. Regions and Branches will provide their ADM with a variance report

(copied to SPPB) on the Wednesday, preceding the second Monday of the month. Each ADM will be responsible to speak to divisional performance questions at the Executive Meeting on the second Monday of the month following the end of the Quarter.

Capital Allocations and Reallocations

Annual capital allocations, by asset category, are approved and formally communicated to each branch, region, and timber sales office by the Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Policy and Governance Division, at the beginning of each fiscal year (i.e., April).

Throughout the fiscal year, additional capital allocations can be approved by the Assistant Deputy Minister, as required.

All reallocation of capital funding requires the approval of the ADM, Corporate Policy and Governance Division. An FS471 should be completed and forwarded to Budget Services.

Capital financial reviews will be conducted at each quarter (June 30, September 30, December 31 and at FYE).

Definitions

Actual expenditure: payment made by the Ministry in the form of cash, cheque, or electronic funds transfer for the cost of goods and services acquired or amounts granted or contributed during a fiscal period. Expenditures also includes non-cash expenditures such as amortization, leave liability, journal transfers between responsibility centres, etc. Actual expenditures are recorded in the Ministry's general ledger.

Branch: includes headquarters branches and the office of members of the Executive.

Budget allocation: an authority to spend up to a specified sum within a specific fiscal year to achieve objectives typically included in a performance plan or project plan.

Encumbrances: reservation of funds (from the appropriate budget allocation) where an obligation exists to pay in the current fiscal year for the acquisition of goods and/or services, on the condition that the supplier's obligations are carried out.

Forecast: a best estimate of funding required in the current fiscal year to accomplish activities under an approved performance plan (as approved by the spending authority's supervisor), excluding funds already spent or encumbered.

FTE: the equivalent of one person working 1,827 hours in one year. Direct FTEs include employees whose salaries are paid directly from

the Consolidated Revenue Fund. Indirect FTEs include employees whose salaries are substantially paid by government indirectly through government transfers to external employers

Performance target allocation: A target for a performance measure may be set by policy, by management based on funding and resources available, or by strategic corporate direction. Various processes will be used to determine the appropriate target for each performance measure. Once allocated, the target provides management with direction on priorities that must be achieved with the allocated budget for the fiscal year.

Performance variance: Unless otherwise determined by a Business Area Team for a particular performance measure, the Ministry of Forests defines "substantial achievement" or "achievement" of performance as 85 to 120 % of the allocated performance measure target, as projected to year-end. Achievement at less than 85% or more than 120% of target requires explanation in a variance report.

Targeted Funding: Budget and FTE allocations that have been allocated for a specific purpose. Targeted funding may not be reallocated without prior approval of the Executive.

References

- *Financial Management Operating Policy (FMOP)*, chapter 7.4
- *Expenditure Management Procedures Manual*, Chapter 2
- *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*

Scope

This policy is applicable to all Ministry contracts carried out by the private sector where the Ministry is the direct beneficiary of the deliverable. Exceptions are listed at the end of the policy.

Purpose

These policies establish a general framework for effective contract management and are intended to ensure:

- consistent and efficient contract management practices Ministry-wide
- accountability is assigned to responsibility centre managers and spending authorities for local office contract management
- contracting is undertaken with integrity, in an open, ethical, and prudent manner
- contracts are legally sound and enforceable, and
- risks to the Crown are minimized.

Policy

Branch Directors, Regional Managers, and District Managers are accountable for monitoring the contract management activities within their branch, regional, and district offices. Responsibility centre managers and spending authorities must only consider contracts when the rewards and transfer of risk justify the cost.

The contracting process must provide a fair and open opportunity to all qualified contractors, including all multicultural organizations within communities.

All contracts must be:

- awarded on a competitive basis, using the fair application of established solicitation procedures, except where justified and/or permissible by policy
- fully authorized by the appropriate central agency (where required under Chapter 6 of *General Management Operating Policy*) and the appropriate spending authority prior to the commencement of the work/service. Any amendments to a contract, or changes, additions, or deletions to the work/service after commencement must also be authorized in writing by the appropriate spending authority and the contractor prior to the contractor proceeding with the change.
- in writing on an approved FS contract agreement form and any appropriate schedules, and
- in compliance with government policy.

Contracts must not:

- contravene a collective agreement between the Government and a union/association
- create an employer/employee relationship (i.e., contractor shall be independent of Government and shall operate at arms length from Government)
- result in, or be perceived to result in, a conflict of interest
- acquire a work/service available through a central Government agency (as outlined in Section 6.2.4.1 of *Government Management Operating Policy*), unless that agency approves the contract, or
- delegate responsibility to a contractor for decisions that are the fundamental responsibility of the Ministry as mandated by legislation and Government policy.

The Ministry shall retain copyright to, and ownership of, all material produced or received by contractors in the course of working on the contract.

Procurement Methods

Spending authorities must use the following procurement methods (also referred to as "competition" methods) to solicit bids on proposed contracts:

Invitation to Tender (ITT): An ITT is used where the Ministry provides contractors with definite methodologies, standards, and specifications for the work to be performed.

Invitation to Quote (ITQ): An invitation to quote process may be used instead of the ITT provided:

- either the estimated value of the proposed contract is less than $25,000 or the responsibility centre manager approves its use
- it is used in conjunction with either the select or direct invitation notification method, and
- each prospective contractor receives the same verbal or written information concerning work specifications, proposed methodology, and performance standards.

Request for Proposals (RFP): An RFP is used where the nature of the work cannot be clearly defined or quantified, a standard methodology for doing the work does not exist, or the work performance standards cannot be specified.

Pre-Qualification

Ministry offices shall establish and use a select list (also known as eligibility, source, or bidders list) of pre-qualified contractors (that meet appropriate specified eligibility requirements) whenever soliciting offers by select invitation.

Notification Methods

Spending authorities shall solicit bids on proposed contracts through the following notification methods (also referred to as "solicitation" methods):

National advertising: National advertising must be used for all federal-provincial *Agreement on Internal Trade* (AIT) applicable Ministry contracts.

Public Advertising: Public advertising must be used for Ministry contracts to which the AIT does not apply (i.e., AIT exempt) and any of the following

conditions exist:

- there is a need to establish current market value
- extensive contractor interest suggests public advertising is appropriate
- there is a need to increase contractor response and enhance competition, or
- the Ministry will obtain increased value for money.

Select Invitation: Select invitation may be used for non-AIT applicable contracts provided:

- all contractors on the select list are invited to bid, or
- if there is a large number of contractors on the select list, contractors are rotationally invited in groups of three or more in a manner that will provide all contractors an opportunity to bid on approximately the same total dollar value of work over the contracting season.

Select invitation may also be used for AIT applicable contracts provided the select list:

- is created through national advertising
- is re-advertised annually, and
- all contractors on the list are invited to submit offers.

Direct Invitation (direct award): Contracts may be awarded by direct invitation only if:

- the situation is an emergency, or
- the contract concerns matters of a confidential or privileged nature and disclosure of those matters could reasonably be expected to compromise Government confidentiality, cause economic disruption, or otherwise be contrary to the public interest, or
- it has recently been confirmed that only one contractor within a reasonable economic distance of the work area is qualified and/or available to perform the work/service or
- the contract is for silviculture services valued at less that $50,000, and award will be under the initiative for the direct award of silviculture contracts to First Nations contractors/organizations, or
- the contract is valued at less than $25,000, and prices obtained through direct invitation correspond with current market value for the work/service (i.e., as determined through recent publicly advertised contracts).

Direct awards to recent (i.e., within 6 months) former Ministry employees should be avoided.

Written pre-approval of the responsibility centre manager is required wherever:

- a direct award exceeds $25,000, or
- cumulative direct awards (including subsequent increases, renewals, or repeated awards within a fiscal year) to one contractor exceed $25,000

Written pre-approval of the appropriate Assistant Deputy Minister (for regional and branch contracts) and Regional Manager (for district contracts) is required wherever:

- a direct award exceeds $50,000
- cumulative direct awards (including subsequent increases, renewals, or repeated awards within a fiscal year) to one contractor exceed $50,000, or
- a direct award is to a recent (i.e., within 6 months) former Ministry employee.

In the event of an emergency these approvals may be after the contract is awarded.

Notices of Intent: Ministry offices intending to direct award a contract shall issue a Notice of Intent if the contemplated contract is expected to exceed $50,000. Notices of Intent are not required for Forest Renewal BC funded contracts or in cases of emergency.

Bid and Performance Securities

Bid and performance securities are required on all major works contracts.

Spending authorities may, at their discretion, specify bid and performance securities for:

- minor works
- general services
- operational services
- consulting services (although not recommended, the responsibility centre managers may approve the use of bid and performance securities for consulting services contracts).

Local minor works/services contracts or equipment rental agreements do not require bid or performance securities.

If the pre-tender cost estimate for a major works contract is greater than $250,000, the contract must require a performance bond in the value of at least 50% of the total contract price.

Labour and Material Payment Bonds

Labour and material payment bonds:

- are required on all major works contracts where the contract specifies a performance bond is the only acceptable form of performance security
- may be required on minor works contracts where:
  - the pre-tender estimate is greater than $25,000
  - a performance bond is required, and
  - labour and materials form a significant part of the overall project.

Insurance

The Ministry requires contractors to provide insurance of the types and amounts appropriate to the contracting situation.

The contractor will obtain all required insurance at its own expense.

Before work commences, the contractor must provide proof of insurance, by means of a certificate of insurance, duly completed and signed by the contractor and the contractor's insurance broker or agent.

Warranties

Warranties are required for contracts greater than $100,000 which

- supply and install a manufactured product or customized computer software, or
- construct a facility, building, road, bridge, or other structure.

If a warranty is required, include one of the following as a contract requirement:

- a performance bond (preferred)
- a performance holdback, or
- a maintenance bond.

Third Party Claims Holdbacks

Ministry contracts require a 10% third party claims holdback on the following:

- all major works projects/contracts
- minor works contracts with a pre-contract estimate over $25,000, for work undertaken on Crown Provincial forest land, and
- operational or general services contracts with a pre-contract estimate over $25,000 where the contractor will employ a workforce in excess of 10 workers for which the contractor can be anticipated to expend greater than 25% of the total contract value in the purchase of equipment, materials, or supplies from third parties.

Third party claims holdbacks are not required for:

- one-person contracts that do not require the contractor to supply any materials or any additional labour
- local minor works/services contracts, consulting services contracts, or equipment rental agreements.

A 10% statutory holdback is required for all major/minor works contracts with a pre-contract estimate over $5,000 for work to be performed on Ministry owned, leased, or rented property which is registered in the Land Titles Office (and thereby subject to lien under the *Builders Lien Act*).

Workers' Compensation Board Coverage (WCB)

Contractors must be independently registered for Workers' Compensation coverage for the work being performed, except in emergencies or other situations where:

- a qualified contractor with (or eligible for) WCB registration is not available
- a contractor, otherwise fully qualified to provide the work/service is available, but is not eligible for Workers' Compensation registration, (and/or the contractor is not registered for the type of work to be performed) and can verify WCB's current denial of registration
- the contract was advertised and no bidders were able to obtain (and show proof of) WCB coverage and it is not viable to increase advertising to seek other qualified contractors who have or are eligible for Workers' Compensation registration, and
- the responsibility centre manager approves the engaging of a contractor who is not registered with WCB and documents the justification for this decision in writing.

In these situations WCB coverage will be extended to the contractor under the Ministry's number and WCB will consider the contractor to be a worker of the Ministry.

When the Ministry engages a contractor who is not registered with WCB, in addition to assuming liability for WCB regulation compliance and WCB claims costs, the Ministry has responsibility for the worker's safety, including but not limited to:

- provision of adequate supervision and job instructions (including reporting accidents/injuries, unsafe conditions, and WHMIS regulations)
- provision of training to do the job safely
- provision of written safe work procedures for the type of work hazards exposed to
- provision of personal protective equipment as required by WCB regulations 8.14
- provision of first aid training/equipment as required by regulations
- ensuring only authorized, adequately trained contractors operate machinery and equipment
- ensuring copies of the WCB Regulations are available, and
- ensuring the contractor understands their responsibility to refuse to do work which is an undue hazard.

In addition, the responsibility centre manager is responsible for responding to orders for non-compliance and the payment of WCB penalty sanctions for serious non-compliance.

Where the Ministry takes over on-site direction and control of the work rather than monitoring quality standards (consistent with the terms of the contract), the WCB may determine that the Ministry has responsibility for WCB regulation compliance.

Contractor WCB registration must include Personal Option Protection coverage for the proprietor/partners of a non-incorporated business and for independent operators if they will be performing any of the work or providing the service.

Contractor private liability insurance coverage does not remove any liability the Ministry may have under the *Workers Compensation Act*.

Evaluations

Spending authorities must ensure post-completion evaluations are completed for all contracts over $50,000 to provide a record of the contractor's performance and assist in future contracting.

Responsibilities: Responsibility Centre Managers

Responsibility centre managers must:

- delegate contract management responsibilities only to those employees that have sufficient knowledge to carry out the responsibilities
- establish comprehensive contract case files on each Ministry contract, and
- monitor contract practices in their responsibility centre.

Definitions

Approved FS Contract Agreement Forms: contract agreement forms vetted by Financial Management Branch and approved by Legal Services Branch.

Bid security: security submitted with a tender or proposal as assurance that the successful bidder will meet all pre-contract requirements and will enter into the contract. Bid securities are also a means to deter bid rigging. Bid securities may also be referred to as bid deposits.

Emergency: a situation when there is danger to life, limb, or property (including environmental damage).

Invitation to Quote (ITQ): a formal process similar to but less formal than the ITT, where the Ministry invites verbal or written offers from contractors. The qualified bidder who submits the lowest priced offer is normally awarded the contract.

Invitation to Tender (ITT): a formal process where the Ministry invites prospective contractors to submit written offers, in sealed envelopes, offering their price to provide the required work/service. The qualified bidder who submits the lowest priced offer is normally awarded the contract.

Labour and material payment bonds: bonds which guarantee the contractor's payment of all accounts to direct subcontractors, suppliers, employees, etc. It does not guarantee payment to the subcontractor's suppliers, employees, etc., unless the bond indicates such coverage.

National advertising: to meet AIT requirements, advertising on the Ministry contract opportunities web site or in the *Vancouver Sun*. The *Journal of Commerce* may be used instead of the *Vancouver Sun*, but only for construction contracts.

Performance bond: bond issued by licensed bonding companies which guarantees that the contractor will promptly and faithfully perform the contract in accordance with its specifications.

Performance security: security to guarantee a contractor will promptly and faithfully perform the contract in accordance with its terms and specifications and to protect the Ministry where it may suffer losses from:

- the contractor's poor or non-performance, or
- damage/loss of irreplaceable or valuable Ministry equipment or materials.

Public Advertising: advertising in the printed media locally, regionally, or provincially as appropriate. The Ministry's contract opportunities internet site may be used.

Request for Proposals (RFP): a formal process where the Ministry invites prospective contractors to propose through written action plans or concepts, in sealed envelopes, how and at what price they would provide a service or complete a project.

Responsibility centre manager: Regional Manager, District Manager, and Branch Director.

Statutory Holdback: funds withheld from contract payments to provide protection from liens under the *Builders Lien Act*.

Third Party Claims Holdback: funds withheld from contract payments to provide protection for work performed and materials supplied and/or to cover payment of claims made by Government agencies (e.g., Employment Standards Branch, Workers' Compensation Board, Revenue Canada).

Warranties: a form of guarantee specifying that the contractor will make any repairs or replace any defective parts free of charge for a specified period of time.

Exceptions to this Policy

This policy is not applicable to:

- agreements listed under Section 3 of the *Range Act (RSBC 1996)*
- agreements listed under Section 12 of the *Forest Act (RSBC 1996)*
- special use permits issued under *the Provincial Forest Use Regulation*
- purchase agreements administered by the Purchasing Commission, and
- inter-agency or inter-Ministry agreements.

References

- *Financial Administration Act*
- *Financial Management Operating Policy*
- *General Management Operating Policy*, Chapter 6
- Agreement on Internal Trade
- *Contract Management Manual*

Chapter 4 - Employment and Compensation
Table of Contents

Contents

4.1 Lateral Transfer from Severely Isolated Locations
4.2 Classification Program
4.3 Classification Review
4.4 Position Classification Appeals
4.5 Organizational Change
4.6 Salary Administration for Excluded Employees
4.7 Flexible Work Options *(to be developed)*
4.8 Equity Issues Assistance *(to be developed)*
4.9 Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace

Scope

This policy explains lateral transfers of employees from severely isolated locations.

Policy

To encourage recruitment to isolated locations and to maintain employees' job satisfaction and productivity; qualified, eligible employees from severely isolated locations can apply for lateral transfers. This policy does not restrict the employees' option to apply for a lateral transfer under, PSERC's Personnel Management Policies, Public Service Act Directive, 3.1 or to apply on a competition via the usual staffing route.

Severely Isolated Locations

- Dease Lake
- Fort Nelson
- Hagensberg
- Queen Charlotte City
- Stewart

Qualified Employees

Employees are eligible for lateral transfers from severely isolated locations if they are:

- Scientific Technical Officer 18 and above
- Clerk R9 and above
- AO18 and above
- FO 18 and above
- IS 14 and above
- TEO R16 and above
- Licensed Science Officer 2 and above
- Management Level 2 and above

Employees who meet one of the above criteria may qualify for a lateral transfer if they:

- have demonstrated strong skills, competent knowledge, and an ability to meet job performance expectations, and job performance has been documented by the employee's supervisor and verified through the District Manager's/Regional Manager's/BC Timber Sales Manager's/Fire Centre Manager's recommendation
- have been employed for three or more consecutive years at a severely isolated location

Available Vacancies

The employee is responsible for applying through their Regional/District/BC Timber Sales/Fire Centre Manager for a lateral transfer. At this time, employees will identify their preferred locations. The employee's preferred locations will be considered but the two locations offered to the employee will not be restricted to these stated preferences.

After ensuring that all eligibility requirements are met, the Manager will forward the employee's application to the Operations Assistant in the Assistant Deputy Minister of Operations office. The Operations assistant will work with BC Timber Sales, Protection, Field Services and Head Quarter Branches to monitor posting requests for suitable transfer opportunities.

All qualified, eligible employees who apply for a lateral transfer will be offered a choice of two locations in non-severely isolated districts anywhere in the province, as vacancies become available.

NOTE: Before being granted access to vacant positions under this policy, all employees will be required to serve a two-month waiting period which will commence after the ADM Operations' Office has received a copy of their application for lateral transfer from the Region.

Suitability Interview

An employee being considered for a lateral transfer may be required to attend a suitability interview.

If two or more equally qualified employees are interested in the same vacancy, an interview is conducted to select the successful employee, based on normal merit selection criteria.

Refusal of Transfer Opportunity

Employees will be offered two transfer opportunities. If both lateral transfer opportunities presented to them are refused, the employee must wait one year to requalify before further consideration will be given, unless there are special circumstances that may warrant a waiver of this condition by the ADM, Operations Division.

Approval

Transfers must be demonstrated as being in the best interest of the Ministry. All requests will be considered but may not be immediately approved due to operational concerns, such as recruitment or financial restraints.

Regional Managers, BC Timber Sales Managers and Fire Centre Managers are authorized to transfer employees within the scope of this policy to another location within their region. Inter-regional transfers, under this policy, will be authorized by concurrence between both managers. The Assistant Deputy Minister, Operations Division, must authorize District Manager lateral transfer requests.

**During periods of staffing restraint, PSERC approval may also be required for transfers that involve a geographic relocation.

In cases of disputes, the Assistant Deputy Minister, Operations Division, has authorization to finalize lateral transfer decisions.

All employees who apply for a lateral transfer will be notified, in writing, whether or not their application has been approved.

Relocation Costs

Relocation costs are borne by the receiving region or district, as per the terms and conditions of the relevant collective agreements and the terms and conditions for excluded employees.

Conditions of Employment

If the transfer is deemed a comparable position, the employee will not serve a subsequent probationary period.

References

- BCGEU Master Agreement
- BCPEA Master Agreement
- Consolidated Terms and Conditions for Exclusions, Schedule 5
- Personnel Management Policies and Procedures

Scope

This policy covers the classification program used to determine the relative worth of positions within the Ministry's organizational units.

Policy

Whenever possible, the Ministry will involve managers at all levels, human resource officers, and supervisors in the classification decision-making process.

The Ministry will establish and maintain classification committees from time to time to evaluate positions within major segments of the Ministry. When required, these may include the following committees:

- Ministry Management Job Evaluation
- Administrative Job Evaluation
- Licensed Science Officer Job Evaluation
- Scientific Technical Officer Job Evaluation

Positions not evaluated by a classification committee will be evaluated by a Classification Analyst in consultation with the managers and supervisors.

Appointment Conditions

Individual appointments to a classification committee must be approved by the Executive Committee and will be for a minimum two year period. Appointees must take classification training.

Job Evaluation Committee

Job evaluation committees will be formed and operated according to specific parameters and objectives. Minor variations are permitted between committees (see Appendix).

Each job evaluation committee will have a Classification Analyst as one of the members to coordinate committee activities and act as staff advisor. The analyst may be elected as chairperson and assume regular duties as a committee member.

Authority

The Deputy Minister is responsible for the classification of all positions within the Ministry that have been formally delegated to the Ministry by the Public Service Employee Relations Commission. This authority may be further delegated to officials who are fully experienced and knowledgeable in the classification function.

References

- Policy and Procedures Manual, Chapter 2.3, *Job Evaluation*

Appendix - Ministry Evaluation Committees

Specific Duties and Responsibilities

1. To evaluate positions against the applicable classification/evaluation plan or classification specification.
2. To compare positions being rated against benchmarks in the appropriate classification/evaluation plan or classification specification.
3. To compare rated positions against other similar positions within and outside the Ministry, when required.
4. To write rationales supporting classification decisions arrived at by the committee for review and acceptance by the Ministry Job Evaluation Official, and after acceptance, to send these rationales to the responsible Line Manager for action.
5. To develop written classifications for non-delegated positions to be confirmed by either the Public Service Employee Relations Commission or the inter-ministry Job Evaluation Advisory Committee.
6. To recommend changes in the language of the classification/ evaluation plans or classification specifications, to the Manager Organization, Classification and Compensation.
7. To exclude from evaluation those positions that do not meet the inclusion criteria of a classification/evaluation plan or classification specification.
8. To undertake on-site reviews to determine if all relevant material has been stated in the job description.
9. To call resource persons as required to assist in the job evaluation process.
10. To ensure that the integrity, application and administration of the classification plans are consistently and equitably maintained.
11. To file minority classification reports should a classification committee member deem it necessary.
12. To assist in the preparation of the Ministry's response to a formal classification appeal.
13. To request managers to submit job descriptions for classification review.
14. To assist in the development of new or revised classification standards.

Scope

This policy covers the classification reviews which determine the relative worth of a position within the organization of the Ministry of Forests.

Policy

The duties and responsibilities of each position in the Ministry will be accurately described in a job description.

Job descriptions are reviewed regularly and updated a minimum of once every two years to ensure that the duties and responsibilities are accurately described.

Revised Job Description

If significant differences exist between an existing job description and an employee's actual duties, a revised job description must be prepared.

Before submitting a new or revised job description, the responsible Excluded Program Manager, in conjunction with a Human Resource Advisor, will assess new and revised duties and responsibilities to ensure that:

- duties and responsibilities do not overlap with the functions of other positions
- duties and responsibilities are consistent with the position's functional and organizational requirements
- duties and responsibilities reflected in the job description have been delegated
- duties and responsibilities are not tailored to accommodate incumbents' qualifications

An organizational chart, signed and dated by the responsible Program Manager, must accompany each job description. The organizational chart should show a minimum of two levels above the position and all positions within the work unit.

Disputed Outcome

If an employee disputes the outcome of a classification review, the employee may appeal the classification decision. (See Policy 4.4, *Position Classification Appeals*.)

References

- *BC Government Collective Agreement*, s. 28.04 (a)(b)(c)(d)
- Personnel Management Policy and Procedures Manual, December 1990, s. 2.2, 2.3, *Job Evaluation*

Scope

This policy covers classification appeals for all bargaining unit positions. Classification appeals may occur when employees feel their positions have not been evaluated fairly.

Policy

Classification appeal is a right defined by the Master Agreement for all bargaining unit employees. The process is one that can be followed by employees who feel their positions have not been evaluated fairly. Employees are entitled to:

- a written description of their current job duties and responsibilities
- an explanation of how the classification level was determined
- a review of the job classification decision at successive levels of the organization

Appeal Process

Employees who feel their positions have not been evaluated fairly must first request a position review by their immediate supervisor or excluded program manager. If the review is not satisfactorily completed at the first level, employees are entitled to proceed through the following levels until final resolution:

- local management (Region or Branch Human Resource Officer)
- Human Resources Branch (Organization, Classification, and Compensation section)
- Public Service Employee Relations Commission
- Classification Referee

Responsibility

Managers and employees have certain responsibilities in the appeal process.

Supervisors and excluded program managers must:

- define in writing the employee's duties and responsibilities
- discuss the duties and responsibilities with the employee
- review the job duties and responsibilities regularly
- explain the classification rationale to the employees
- request a classification review where substantive changes have occurred

Employees must:

- request clarification of job duties and responsibilities as they change
- confirm the content and accuracy of their job description by reviewing it with their immediate supervisor
- specify their concerns with the classification, either in consultation with their Human Resource Officer or their union representative

Branch and Regional Human Resource Officers must:

- ensure that accurate job descriptions are maintained for all positions within their jurisdiction
- ensure that job descriptions are signed by both the employee and immediate supervisor/excluded manager
- confirm that the job descriptions are accurate and consistent with Ministry-approved organization structures
- review the classification process with the employee and the immediate supervisor to resolve classification issues or concerns before a formal appeal is initiated

References

- *Classification Appeal Procedure*, s. 28.04(a) to (f), BCGEU collective agreement
- *Classification Appeal Procedure*, s. 33.02(a) to (h), Professional Employees Association
- Policy and Procedures Manual, Chapter 2.3, *Job Evaluation*

Scope

This policy covers salary administration for employees in excluded positions other than Schedule "A" positions.

Purpose

To ensure equitable and consistent salary administration for excluded employees.

Policy

Employees will advance from their initial salary placement in the range up to the maximum job rate assigned to the position. Salary increments will be determined by the employee's length of time in the position and satisfactory performance.

Authority

Salary administration for excluded employees is guided by Public Service Employee Relations Commission policy outlined in Chapter 2 (Section 2.2) and 4 (Section 4.1) of the Personnel Management Policy Manual and in the references cited at the end of this document. Exceptions to salary administration procedures, not contemplated under this or PSERC's Salary Administration Policies for Excluded Employees, must be approved by the Director Human Resources Branch. This policy will be administered by the Manager, Job Evaluation Services.

Definitions

Anniversary Date: An employee's date of appointment to their current position and classification level. The 1st anniversary date is 12 months (1827 hours for less than full-time employment) from the date of appointment.

Base Position: The position classification to which an employee was appointed under the provisions of the *Public Service Act* (PSA).

Demotion: Occurs when an employee moves to a position of lower compensation.

Excluded Employees:

- are appointed to positions excluded from a bargaining unit under Section 1.1 of the *Public Service Labour Relations Act* (PSLRA), except those with a bargaining unit classification e.g. Schedule 'A' employees; or
- are appointed by an Order-in-Council that specifies that their position be evaluated under the Management Job Evaluation Plan; or

- are appointed to, or occupying, a position which has been negotiated out of the bargaining unit through the application of Sections 12(3)(a), (b) or (c) of PSLRA. The date of agreement, between the employer and bargaining agent of the position's exclusion from the bargaining unit, may be the effective date for the purposes of reclassification.

Job Rate: The maximum salary (100%) for a classification level in the Management Job Evaluation Plan.

Promotion: Occurs when an employee moves to a position of higher compensation.

Temporary Appointment: Occurs when an employee is formally designated to perform the principal duties of a higher, lower or equivalent excluded position. When the temporary appointment is to be made to a position of lower compensation, this must be referred to the Manager, Job Evaluation Services before the appointment is finalized.

Effective Date: The date of appointment to the excluded position or the date of the position's exclusion from the bargaining unit agreed to by the employer and bargaining unit representative.

Salary upon Appointment

Salary on appointment will not normally exceed 92% of the job rate.

Consideration for Up-Range Hire

Circumstances can arise where there is a need to consider a salary on appointment which exceeds 92%. Consideration for an exception to this policy may be made by application to the Manager, Job Evaluation Services under the following conditions:

- the appointment is a lateral transfer from an identical position; or
- there is a salary compression problem with incumbents of subordinate positions; or
- the appointment at 92% results in a compensation increase of less than 8%; or
- an out-of-service candidate formally rejects the salary offer (in writing); and
    - it is verified that the candidate is presently earning more than what is being offered at 92% of the job rate; and
    - there is no other suitable, equally-qualified candidate available from the current competition; and
    - there is reason to believe that a second, or subsequent competition, will not produce more equally-qualified candidates (due to difficulty of recruitment/specialization of position, etc.); and
    - that the up range salary proposal will not negatively impact other employees' perceptions of equity and/or fairness for work undertaken at the same classification level in the same work unit.

Subsequent Increases

Subsequent increases are not automatic, but must be supported by documentation of satisfactory performance. Provided the performance review is satisfactory then employees are entitled to salary increases based upon the following schedule:

When	**Basis**	**% of Job Rate**
Upon appointment	N/A	Up to 92% of the job rate
6 month review	Satisfactory performance	Up to 94% of the job rate
1st anniversary date	Satisfactory performance	Up to 96% of the job rate
2nd anniversary date	Satisfactory performance	Up to 100% of the job rate

The effective date of an increase will be the first day of the first full pay period following the anniversary date.

Salary on Reclassification

The salary of an employee whose job has been reclassified will not normally exceed 96% of the job rate for the new level. Following reclassification, the employee will become eligible for subsequent increases on the same basis as that described under **Subsequent Increases**.

If an employee's salary is at the job rate at the time of the reclassification, and the resultant percentage increase at 96% would be less than 8%, then a higher placement in the new salary range (as a result of the position's reclassification) may be appropriate. Consideration under these circumstances may be made by application to the Manager, Job Evaluation Services.

Reclassified employees' anniversary dates will change to reflect their start date at the new classification level.

Salary on Temporary Appointment

Salary on temporary appointment will normally be guided by the same principles applying to **Salary upon Appointment** to a regular position. A temporary appointee's salary should not exceed that of a regular appointee in an equivalent position. For the term of the temporary appointment salary increases will follow the schedule laid out under **Subsequent Increases** – the six month review period does not apply.
Temporary appointments shall be granted for a minimum period of five (5) consecutive working days. It must be documented that the full scope of responsibilities and decision-making contemplated in the position will be assigned to the temporary appointee.

When temporarily appointed to management positions, bargaining unit employees are temporarily excluded from the bargaining unit for the duration of the assignment.

Salary recommendations for Temporary Appointments, over 92%, must be approved by the Manager, Job Evaluation Services before agreements are finalized with the employee. position. Upon the termination of the Temporary Assignment the employee returns to their base position and its attendant classification and compensation level.

Temporary appointments to positions with a lower classification must be referred to the Manager, Job Evaluation Services before an agreement is made with the employee.

Salary on Lateral Transfer

When an employee moves from one position to another at the same classification level, no change in salary will be considered without the manager's recommendation and the authorization by the Manager, Job Evaluation Services. The anniversary date for increment purposes remains the same.

Salary on Demotion

Demotion means the assignment of an employee to a position, or level of work, that is less than the employee's base position classification.

Employee-initiated: If a demotion is initiated by an employee, no salary protection is provided. The employee will be appointed to the lower level position at 100% of its job rate.

Ministry-initiated: If, through no fault of their own, an employee experiences an involuntary demotion, salary protection will apply according to the following provisions:

If the demotion is equal to or less than one salary range (e.g. ML 5 to ML 4) the employee's current salary will be maintained until it falls within the range for the new classification level eg. ML 5 to ML 4.

If the demotion is greater than one salary range (e.g. ML 6 to ML 4) the following provisions apply:

- the employee's salary will remain at its existing rate for 12 months from the effective date of the demotion;
- on the first anniversary date of the demotion, the employee's salary will be decreased by 25% of the difference between it and the current job rate for the new classification;
- on the second anniversary date of the demotion, the employee's salary will be further decreased by 25% of the original difference between it and the current job rate for the new classification;
- on the third anniversary date of the demotion, the employee's salary will be further decreased by 25% of the original difference between it and the current job rate for the new classification;
- on the fourth anniversary date, should the protected salary continue to exceed the job rate for the employee's new position, then it will be adjusted to the job rate of the new classification.

During the period of salary protection, the employee will not receive general salary increases to the job rate unless the maximum of the range for the new position classification exceeds the employee's protected salary.

In the event an employee is promoted during the salary protection period, and the maximum of the new range is still below the protected salary, then the amount of the required reduction will be adjusted downward, and the salary protection and reduction schedule will be maintained for the remainder of the original time period.

Management-initiated: If a demotion is initiated for just cause, then salary protection may not apply and the employee may be subject to the **Salary Upon Appointment** provisions of this policy. Such cases must be referred to the Manager, Job Evaluation Services prior to any salary administration action being taken.

Leave of Absence

Employees on approved leave are eligible for salary adjustments when a general salary increase to the job rate occurs. If the leave is without pay, the salary level will be adjusted when the employee returns to work.

Employees who are paid less than 100% of the full job rate and who are absent on approved leave without pay for a period of 30 consecutive calendar days or more will have their anniversary date adjusted by a time period equivalent to the period of leave, and this will become the employee's new anniversary date for salary adjustment purposes.

References

- Master Agreement(s) between the Government of the Province of BC and the Professional Employees' Association and BCGEU
- Personnel Management Policy, PSERC:
  - Chapter 2.2, Job Evaluation for Management Positions
  - Chapter 3.2, Substitution
  - Chapter 4.1, Salary Administration for Management Employees
  - Chapter 7.0 Policy Directive 7.6, ***Salary Protection for Management Employees*** (January 1, 1999)
- Memorandum dated November 16, 1998 (File 1657-01) from Director, Human Resources Branch ***Temporary Assignment Agreements and Salary Administration – Management Exclusions***

Scope

This policy contains policies and procedures on discrimination and harassment in the workplace.

Policy

Harassment will not be tolerated in the Ministry of Forests, and will be dealt with expeditiously. Harassment violates the fundamental rights, dignity, and integrity of the individual. The Ministry of Forests, in cooperation with its unions, will promote a work environment that is free from discrimination and harassment and where all employees are treated with respect and dignity.

The objective of this policy is to prevent discrimination and harassment and to provide procedures for handling complaints and recommending discipline where discrimination or harassment is found to have occurred.

Protection against discrimination and harassment extends to incidents occurring at or away from the workplace, and during or outside working hours, provided the acts are committed within the course of the employment relationship.

Discrimination and Harassment

Discrimination and harassment relate to any of the prohibited grounds in the *British Columbia Human Rights Act*. Prohibited conduct ought reasonably be known to be unwelcome and may be verbal, non-verbal, physical, deliberate, unintended, or unsolicited. It may be one incident, or a series of incidents, depending on the context.

Employees have the right to employment without discrimination or harassment because of race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, family status, marital status, physical disability, mental disability, sex, age, sexual orientation, political belief, and conviction for a criminal or summary offence unrelated to their employment.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome comment or conduct of a sexual nature that may detrimentally affect the work environment or lead to adverse job-related consequences for the victim of the harassment.

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- a person in authority asking an employee for sexual favours in return for being hired or receiving promotions or other employment benefits
- sexual advances with actual or implied work-related consequences
- sexist comments or sexual invitations
- verbal abuse, intimidation, or threats of a sexual nature
- leering, staring, or making sexual gestures
- display of pornographic or other sexual materials
- offensive pictures, graffiti, cartoons, or sayings
- unwanted physical contact such as touching, patting, pinching, hugging
- physical assault of a sexual nature

Definitions

Employee: A person employed or appointed under Section 5 of the *Public Service Act*, or a person employed or appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council under the *Public Service Act*.

Employer: The Ministry of Forests.

Complainant: An employee who has brought forward or filed a complaint under those procedures alleging that discrimination or harassment has occurred.

Respondent: An employee (or group of employees) who is alleged to have discriminated against or harassed the complainant.

Constituent Groups:

- British Columbia Government and Service Employees' Union
- Professional Employees' Association
- Excluded employees

Deputy Minister: Refers to the Deputy Minister to whom a written complaint under the formal component of these procedures may be sent and to whom the complainant and/or the respondent may report.

Investigator: An individual designated by the Deputy Minister to investigate formal complaints of discrimination and harassment.

Adjudicator: The designated individual(s) who has been mutually agreed to. Other adjudicators may be appointed with the agreement of the parties.

Union: The bargaining agent and constituent group for the bargaining unit to which the complainant or the respondent belongs.

Procedures

All those involved in the handling of a complaint under these procedures will hold in the strictest confidence all information of which they become aware. The parties recognize, however, that various officials of the

constituent groups and the Ministry will be made aware of all or part of the proceeding on a need-to-know basis.

Informal Resolution

Employees who believe that they have a complaint of discrimination or harassment may approach their union representative, supervisor, or other contact person to discuss potential means of resolving a complaint and to request assistance in resolving the matter. If the matter is dealt with to the complainant's satisfaction, it is deemed to be resolved.

If the matter is not resolved to the employee's satisfaction, the employee will approach the first excluded level of management not involved in the matter within six months of the alleged occurrence for assistance in resolving the complaint.

The manager will investigate and take steps to resolve the complaint within 30 days of it being raised by the employee.

The manager will discuss the proposed resolution with the complainant and the respondent.

The complainant and the respondent may have a union representative present if they are members of a bargaining unit, or if not, another representative may be present during these discussions.

When the first excluded level of management is the respondent, the employee will approach the respondent's supervisor.

Formal Resolution

If the resolution proposed as a result of the management investigation is not acceptable, the employee may refer the matter through the constituent groups in writing to the Deputy Minister, or his or her designate, within 30 days of receiving the manager's response or when the response was due.

Employees who are not members of a bargaining unit may file a written complaint within 30 days directly with the Deputy Minister or they may seek assistance through the Minister's contact person in filing a complaint with the Deputy Minister or designate.

A written complaint will specify the details of the allegation(s) including:

- name, title, and Ministry of the respondent
- description of the action(s), conduct, events, or circumstances involved in the complaint
- the specific remedy sought to satisfy the complaint
- dates of incidents
- names of witnesses (if any)
- prior attempts to resolve (if any)

The Deputy Minister or designate will acknowledge, in writing, receipt of the written complaint, have the matter investigated, and take steps to resolve the matter.

The Unions and the employees involved will be advised in writing of the proposed resolution within 30 working days from the date the Deputy Minister receives the written complaint or a later date mutually agreed to by the constituent groups and the Ministry.

Adjudication

When the matter is not resolved following the formal investigation, the union may refer the matter to adjudication.

When a complaint has been filed at the adjudicative stage, an adjudicator will be appointed within 10 working days of receiving notice to proceed to adjudication.

The adjudication must be conducted in a manner consistent with the principles of natural justice, so as to give those involved a fair hearing. The adjudication must be held in private, and the Ministry has full standing.

The Adjudicators will determine their own procedures and may admit any evidence deemed necessary or appropriate, consistent with the principles of natural justice.

The Adjudicator may:

- make findings of fact
- decide if, on the facts, harassment has occurred
- attempt to mediate a resolution to the complaint
- make recommendations regarding resolution of the complaint, which may include discipline

The Adjudicator will forward the report and recommendations as expeditiously as possible to:

- the complainant
- the respondent
- the Deputy Minister
- the constituent groups

The decision as to whether or not discrimination or harassment has occurred is binding on the Ministry, the complainant, the respondent, and the constituent groups.

Implementation

The Deputy Minister will consider the decision and recommendations of the Adjudicator in determining what action should be taken respecting the complaint. The complainant, the respondent, and any other applicable party will be notified of the Deputy Minister's decision within five working days of receiving the Adjudicator's report.

Disciplinary action taken by the Ministry, consistent with the recommendations of the Adjudicator, will be considered by all parties to be determinative of the complaint and will not form the basis of a grievance.

Disciplinary action taken by the Ministry which exceeds the recommendations of the Adjudicator may form the basis of a grievance which will be filed directly.

If the Ministry fails to act upon the recommendations of the Adjudicator, or if the action taken is not consistent with the recommendations, the Deputy Minister's decision may not be considered to be determinative of the complaint.

If the Adjudicator determines that discrimination or harassment has occurred, the Ministry must document the personnel file of the respondent accordingly.

Pending the determination of the complaint, the Deputy Minister may take interim measures to separate the employees concerned, if necessary. Any such action will not be deemed to be disciplinary in nature or seen as presumption of guilt or innocence.

The complainant will not be relocated without his or her agreement.

Other Procedures

In circumstances where either the complainant or the respondent is a Deputy Minister, these procedures will apply. However, in these cases, the function of the Deputy Minister for the purpose of these procedures will be assumed by the Public Service Employee Relations Commission (PSERC).

Harassment does not include actions occasioned through exercising in good faith the Ministry's managerial/supervisory rights and responsibilities.

This policy does not preclude an employee from filing a complaint under Section 8 of the *British Columbia Human Rights Act*. However, an employee will not be entitled to duplication of process. An employee making a complaint of harassment must choose to direct a complaint to either the British Columbia Council of Human Rights or to the formal process specified in the policy and procedures. In either event, a complaint of discrimination or harassment shall not form the basis of a grievance.

An employee who files a written complaint which would be seen by a reasonable person to be frivolous, vindictive, or vexatious may be subject to disciplinary action. Disciplinary action taken may be grieved pursuant to the appropriate collective agreement.

References

- *British Columbia Human Rights Act*
- *Public Service Act*

Contents

5.1 Employee Training
5.2 Employee Development
5.3 Junior Forest Warden Program
5.4 Rewards and Recognition
5.5 Performance Planning and Review
5.6 Education Leave

Scope

This policy covers career training programs for regular status employees employed by the Ministry of Forests.

Policy

The Forest Service requires well-managed employee training programs because Forest Service staff must possess the necessary skills and knowledge to respond to the intensifying demand on forest resources.

To foster and maintain highly motivated, dedicated, and career-oriented employees, the Forest Service will support training programs that enhance personal achievement and growth. Training will be made available to employees on a fair, equitable, and consistent basis to ensure that employees obtain the skills and abilities required to achieve Ministry objectives safely, efficiently, and effectively.

All employees must be given Ministry orientation and taught job-specific occupational health and safety regulations.

Training — Definition

Training is Ministry-initiated and is a planned activity undertaken by the employee and the supervisor. It may include programs or courses (either internal or external, including on-the-job), that relate to current job requirements and increase employees' job-related skills, knowledge, and abilities.

Approval

Training opportunities will be provided on a priority basis, according to the degree of need identified through the Performance Planning and Review process, and as operational needs change.

All applications must be submitted to the appropriate authority for approval prior to the training activity.

Training Time and Costs

Time spent in training activities is considered as time spent on the job. Employees attending training activities outside normal work hours may, with the Ministry's approval, be eligible for overtime or time off in lieu.

Employees attending training courses during normal working hours may occasionally be required to do course-related work during evenings. Overtime pay or time off in lieu will not be provided for such evening work.

Employees will receive full reimbursement for tuition, entrance or registration fees, books, travel, subsistence, and other legitimate expenses approved by the employer.

Authority of Policy

This policy applies throughout the Ministry, except where it conflicts with a provision of one of the following authorities, in which case the authority will prevail:

- collective agreement
- Treasury Board or similar implementation order
- guidelines or arbitrated award related to a collective agreement or compensation plan
- ruling of Federal Court, Provincial Court, or an adjudicator

The Ministry Executive Committee must approve any deviations from this policy.

References

No applicable references.

Scope

This policy covers career development opportunities for all regular status employees employed by the Ministry of Forests. The Ministry requires well-managed employee development programs because Ministry staff must possess the necessary skills and knowledge to respond to the intensifying demand on forest resources.

Policy

Development opportunities will be made available to employees on a fair, equitable, and consistent basis to ensure that employees obtain the skills and abilities required to achieve future Ministry objectives as well as to further their own career plans.

Development Programs Definition

Developmental programs are training activities outside the employees' job responsibilities as defined by their job description. The purpose of the programs is to enhance employees' skills and abilities, and contribute to the future human resource needs of the Ministry. Examples of developmental programs may include special jobs, task assignments, or courses.

Employee Eligibility

To be eligible for development leave to pursue development programs, employees must demonstrate:

- competent performance in all areas of their job
- initiative and success with their self-development
- potential for increased responsibilities

Employees must have a realistic and achievable career plan which falls within the scope of the Public Service mandate and function.

Approval

All applications for participation in a development program must be submitted to the responsibility centre manager or designate for approval prior to beginning the program.

Leave of Absence

A leave of absence for up to 20 working days per fiscal year may be granted for an employee attending a development program.

While participating in a development program lasting 20 days or less, employees will receive half their normal salary. For example, development leave of one day would result in a half day's pay for the employee, whereas development leave of five days would result in 2.5 days pay. The maximum Ministry contribution for development leave is 10 days salary per fiscal year.

Development leave for longer than 20 days comes under the scope of the *Education Leave* policy.

Development Costs

The cost of development training is a shared responsibility between the Ministry and the employee (see *Subsidies*, below). Where approved by the responsibility centre manager, eligible costs will be reimbursed to the employee. At the discretion of the manager, employees may be reimbursed for eligible expenses by an accountable advance or upon successful completion of the course. Employees who have been issued an accountable advance and who do not successfully complete the course will be required to reimburse the Ministry within 10 days after notification of the unsuccessful completion.

Development costs may include:

- tuition
- travel expenses
- accommodation / meals
- transcript costs
- course registration fees
- course materials
- field trip expenses
- exam costs

Any books or materials paid for in full by the Ministry may, at the request of the responsibility centre manager, remain the property of the Ministry for use by other employees.

Where employees are attending internally sponsored training paid for by the Ministry, attendance will be as per the Ministry policy *Employee Training*.

Subsidies

When the development training involves time away from work and/or geographical location to a maximum of 20 working days, the following subsidies will apply:

Costs	Employee Share (%)	Ministry Share (%)
Membership/Registration fees	100	——
Tuition	25	75
Exam fees	100	——
Books	——	100
Travel	——	100
Accommodation / meals	——	100
Salary	50	50

When the development training involves no time away from work or geographical location, (e.g., evenings/weekends), the following subsidies will apply:

Costs	Employee Share (%)	Ministry Share (%)
Membership/Registration fees	100	——
Tuition	——	100
Exam fees	——	100
Books	——	100

Authority of Policy

This policy applies throughout the Ministry, except where it conflicts with a provision of one of the following authorities, in which case the authority will prevail:

- collective agreement
- Treasury Board or similar implementation order
- guidelines or arbitral award related to a collective agreement or compensation plan
- ruling of Federal Court, Provincial Court, or an adjudicator
- guidelines for special Ministry initiatives and programs intended to increase representation of designated groups

The Ministry Executive Committee must approve any deviations from this policy.

References

- Expenditure Management Procedures Manual, *Employee Education Advances*
- *Financial Administration Operating Policy Manual* (FAOP), s. 9.5.6
- Ministry Policy Manual, Revenue and Corporate Services, 5.1, *Employee Training*, and 5.6, *Education Leave*

Scope

This policy covers the Ministry's support of the Junior Forest Warden Program.

Policy

The Ministry will assist and support the British Columbia Forestry Association in the development and maintenance of the Junior Forest Warden Program.
Support.

Regional Managers and District Managers may set targets for the numbers of clubs established and maintained within a region or district.
Success will be evaluated in terms of both:

- the number of new clubs established, and
- the number of existing clubs maintained

Regional and district offices will provide local clubs with routine office, administration, and communication services using available office resources.

References

No applicable references.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees of the Ministry of Forests

Policy

The Ministry shall recognize and reward significant employee performance, accomplishment, and contribution to the organization through Recognition Awards, Safety Awards, and Long Service Awards.

Forest Service Recognition Awards

Branch Directors and Regional and District Managers may approve recognition awards for outstanding job performance provided that such awards are paid out of responsibility centre budgets and are documented and reported as required. Such awards may not exceed a value of $100 for individuals or $25 per member of a group or team. Recognition awards may take the form of cash (i.e., cheques) or gift certificates. The use of the Forest Service ancillary products catalogue also provides an excellent source of recognition awards.

Recognition to a lesser degree may be accomplished through presentation of a Star Certificate signed by the Deputy Minister, Assistant Deputy Minister, or management representative, and presented by the management representative in the presence of the employee's peers. These certificates are available from the Ministry Recognition Administrator, Human Resources Branch.

Procedure

Processes that involve employee-driven nomination and recommendation are useful vehicles in determining recipients of recognition awards and are encouraged to promote a climate of teamwork.

Reporting of Awards

A line manager who approves a recognition award must advise the Ministry Recognition Administrator, Human Resources Branch, either by e-mail or memo, of the following information on each award:

- who received it
- why the award was granted
- what the award was and its value
- who approved it

Reporting to the Executive

The Ministry Recognition Administrator, Human Resources Branch, will keep a record of these awards and provide the Executive with a Ministry report on a quarterly basis.

Government Employee Recognition Program

Recognition and awards are available for employee ideas which are accepted for implementation and meet the criteria of the Government Employee Recognition Program, and for ideas from members of a renewal project team (local/branch/partnership committees) which result in improvements.

Full eligibility, award structure, and program rules and procedure are described in the *Employee Recognition Program Ideas Shine* brochure and in the Public Service Employee Relations Commission (PSERC) Idea form. Additional information is available by contacting the Ministry Recognition Administrator, Human Resources Branch.

Safety Awards

Forest Service Individual Safety Awards

These are awards made to individuals for periods of performance with no time lost due to injury in increments of five years to a maximum of 35 years. Awards take the form of pins and certificates, with the addition of an appropriate gift for those who have achieved 30 and 35 years with no time lost due to injury. Details are contained in Chapter 2, 2.3 of the *Ministry of Forests Accident Prevention Manual*.

British Columbia Safety Council Merit Awards

These awards are made to regions, districts, or branches for performance with no time lost due to injury. The B.C. Safety Council standards are followed to grant these awards. (They are calculated on the basis of person hours worked (all leaves deducted) for a period commencing one day following a compensable time loss injury, the number of employees, and the accident hazard rating of operations being conducted.)

Awards take the form of a plaque presented at a luncheon, dinner, or dinner/dance. Personal awards in lieu of the above may be purchased for a value equal to the meal. Details are contained in Chapter 2, 2.3 of the *Ministry of Forests Accident Prevention Manual*.

Long Service Awards

Government Long Service Awards

Employees who have cumulative service in the provincial government for 25, 35, or 40 years are eligible for the government's long service award. Presentations include: a framed certificate, a sterling silver pin, a photo with the presiding dignitary, and dinner for 25-year employees; dinner, gold watch, photo with the presiding dignitary, and group photo with recipients for 35 year employees; and dinner, photo, group photo, and a crystal decanter for 40-year employees.

The long service award process is administered centrally through the Human Resources Branch. When employees reach 25 or 35 or 40 years of service in a calendar year, their names are submitted to the Government Protocol Branch, which arranges the ceremonies. Award recipients are notified and advised of the process in advance of the ceremony, which takes place each November.

Forest Service Long Service Awards

Employees who have worked continuously for the Ministry for 25 years are eligible for the Forest Service long service award. Presentations include a framed certificate and a pin. The long service award process is administered centrally through the Human Resources Branch.

Communications

The Forest Service newsletter, as well as local office publications, serve as effective communications tools through which Ministry staff can be recognized for their accomplishments and receipt of awards can be publicized. Managers and employees are encouraged to submit news articles which recognize individuals and groups.

References

- *FAPRO Manual*, Section 3B9A, *Suggestion Awards Program*
- *Ministry of Forests Accident Prevention Manual*
- Ministry Policy Manual, Revenue and Corporate Services, 5.5, *Performance Planning and Review*

Scope

This policy covers the planning and review of employee performance.

Policy

All supervisors will establish an annual performance and review process for each staff member.

Performance Planning and Review Process

The performance planning and review process involves the participation of supervisors and staff in reviewing and improving the achievement of results through:

- developing results-oriented objectives
- establishing measurement standards and time frames
- providing regular feedback
- performance analysis
- performance review interviews
- action planning—identifying training and development needs

All aspects of the performance planning and review process are to be fully documented using *Performance Planning and Review*, form FS476.

References

- Master Agreement between B.C. Government (represented by Public Service Employee Relations Commission) and British Columbia Government Employees' Union (BCGEU), 30 August 1992.
- Master Agreement between B.C. Government (represented by Public Service Employee Relations Commission) and British Columbia Government Professional Employees' Association (BCGPEA), August 1992.
- *Performance Planning and Review*, form FS 476

Scope

This policy covers education leave for all regular employees in the Ministry who have completed a minimum of two years employment with the government of British Columbia.

Policy

The Ministry recognizes that its employees represent a valued asset whose career development must be managed to support individual career aspirations and to ensure that the Ministry will have qualified employees to meet its future staffing needs.

To meet these goals, the Ministry will grant education leave to employees, subject to operational and staffing needs, and budgetary considerations.

Definition

Education leave is part of the employee development program and covers a leave of absence to attend an educational institution for a formal course of study leading to a recognized certificate, diploma, degree, or professional qualification.

Leave for education is between twenty-one working days and one calendar year; however, additional leave may be approved. The period of absence may or may not be consecutive.

Authority

This policy applies throughout the Ministry except where it conflicts with a provision of one of the following authorities, in which case the authority will prevail:

- collective agreement
- Treasury Board, Public Service Employee Relations Commission, or similar implementation order
- ruling of Federal Court, Provincial Court, or an adjudicator
- guidelines for special Ministry initiatives and programs intended to increase representation of designated groups

Education Leave With Pay

Education leave with 100% pay may be approved where:

- the training is employer-requested or prescribed
- there are demonstrated severe and immediate recruiting difficulties for essential functions, and
- the training is directly related to future job requirements

Education Leave Without Pay

Education leave without pay may be approved where:

- the Ministry wishes to establish a pool of potential candidates where a skill shortage exists now or will exist in the future
- it is difficult to satisfy the skill requirement through the internal staffing process, and
- the studies may be valuable to the Ministry, but the primary benefit will accrue to the employee

Employee Eligibility

To be eligible for education leave, employees must demonstrate:

- competent performance in all areas of their present job
- initiative and success with respect to their self-development
- potential for increased responsibilities

Employees should have a career plan which is realistic and achievable within the scope of the Public Service mandate and function.

To remain eligible for education leave, employees must continue their enrollment and maintain satisfactory performance in their course of study.

Employee Agreement

Employees are required to sign an agreement stating that they will remain employed by the Province of British Columbia for a certain time period after completion of the training. The time period will vary depending on, for example, whether the leave was granted with or without pay, and on the provisions contained in the relevant collective agreement.

Applications

All applications for education leave with pay and those for education leave without pay in excess of six months, must be submitted at least six months prior to the beginning of the requested leave period.

Employees wishing to apply for an education leave should meet with their supervisor to discuss time frame, feasibility, pay and benefits, and any other pertinent factors. Before approving an application for education leave, the supervisor should consult with the appropriate human resources advisor to review the applicable authorities and explore the options for available subsidies.

Applications are forwarded to the appropriate signing authorities (see *Approval*, below) and should include the following documents:

- written request for education leave, signed by the appropriate authorities
- FS475, *Application for Training & Development*
- FS500, *Leave Management Transaction*
- GPSD15, *Option for Benefits While on Leave*
- signed statement from employee agreeing to return to work at the end of the education leave

Approval

Applications for education leave must be reviewed by an employee's

supervisor and recommended for approval to the appropriate signing authority.

All applications for education leave with pay must be submitted to the Deputy Minister for approval. For education leave without pay, applications must be approved by the following signing authorities:

- 21 – 40 days: Regional Manager or Branch Director
- 41 days – 6 months: Assistant Deputy Minister
- over 6 months: Deputy Minister

Applications requiring the signature of the Deputy Minister are transmitted through the office of the Director, Human Resources Branch from either the Regional Manager or the Branch Director.

If an application for education leave is denied, the manager who denies approval must state the reasons in writing to the employee, who may seek redress at the third level of the grievance process.

Employee Termination

Termination of employment by the employee, or by the employer for just cause, will nullify any obligation for assistance and will result in a requirement for repayment by the employee of any financial assistance received.

References

- *Master Agreement*, BCGEU, Article 20.08
- *PEA Master Agreement*, Article 24.08(a), 25.01, and 25.02
- Personnel Management Policy and Procedures Manual, Vol II, Government of BC, Addendum 7, V2-D-7-1

Chapter 6 - Safety and Health
Table of Contents

Contents

6.1 Critical Incident Stress Management Program
6.3 Firearms - Forestry Use
6.4 Occupational Health and Accident Prevention
6.5 Risk Management - Ongoing Risks
6.6 Environmental Protection from Hazardous Materials *(to be developed)*
6.7 Workplace Violence Prevention Policy

Subject: Critical Incident Stress Management Program
Branch: Human Resources Branch
Signature: Gerry R. Armstrong

No: **6.1**
Effective: 01-Apr-93

Scope

This policy covers the program for prevention, reduction, and control of stress symptoms following a critical incident.

Policy

The Ministry will provide a Critical Incident Stress Management Program (CISMP) which includes:

- education and prevention
- organized intervention for those suffering critical incident stress
- a resource and referral network

Specially selected and trained volunteer employees, working in conjunction with designated mental health personnel, will provide immediate support and assistance to Forest Service personnel exposed to a critical incident.

Definition

Critical incidents are events which may cause personnel to experience unusually strong emotional reactions that have the potential to interfere with their ability to function at the time of the incident or later. Critical incidents include death of a fellow employee, serious injury to co-workers or acquaintances, or severe threatening situations faced by personnel.

Target Group

CISMP is specifically for those employees exposed to a critical incident, and not for employees suffering from cumulative stress.

Funding

Funding for all associated costs, including provincial mental health specialists, will be provided by the Human Resources Branch, Accident Prevention Section.

References

- *Ministry of Forests Accident Prevention Manual*

Scope

This policy covers the use of firearms by Ministry employees.

Policy

Only trained, certified, and authorized staff are permitted to handle firearms. Firearms will be used in a safe manner and only when required in the course of Ministry duties, or for the protection of employees. Handguns are prohibited for use within the Ministry.

Branch Directors, Regional Managers, and District Managers are accountable for monitoring the issuance and use of firearms within their branch, regional, or district offices.

Authorized Use

Ministry and privately-owned firearms are authorized only on the following projects and in the following circumstances:

- the collection of cones, scions, branches, twigs, and foliage
- the control of animal and/or bird pests in forest nurseries and seed orchards
- the temporary immobilization of animals as part of ecological-wildlife research
- the protection of employees and property where wild animals are a threat or a harassment to field parties and fire suppression camps
- signaling to or from people lost or overdue in the field

Ministry employees will be authorized to carry and use firearms when they:

- successfully complete an approved firearms training program and have a valid certificate of training
- show a demonstrated ability to safely use a firearm to the satisfaction of the Branch Director, Regional Manager, or District Manager
- have a British Columbia Firearm Licence
- have a *Ministry Firearms User Authorization Certificate* signed by the Branch Director, Regional Manager, or District Manager

Training

Approved firearms training programs will consist of a Rifle Qualification Course or a Shotgun Qualification Course. Recertification is required on an annual basis. Courses are available through:

- Ministry of Attorney General, Police Services Branch
- Justice Institute of B.C.
- private training contractors or agencies (e.g., police or conservation officers) proficient in firearms training

Note: Conservation, Outdoor Recreation Education (CORE) Program is not an acceptable training program, as there is no demonstrated firing of firearms included in this program.

Authorization Certificate Record

Where a privately-owned firearm is to be used, the owner's name, the firearm make, model serial number, and type of ammunition will be recorded on the *Ministry Firearms User Authorization Certificate*.

Storage

Ministry firearms will be stored out of sight in a locked container. Ammunition, when not being used, will be safely and securely stored in a locked metal container separate from the firearm container.

Both firearms and ammunition will be accounted for at least once a month, with records maintained for audit purposes.

Firearm Safety

Firearms will be made safe and inoperable by complete removal of the bolt, firing pin, or by installation of trigger locks or other means of making firearms inoperable when:

- in storage
- not in use
- authorized for transportation by vehicle, vessel, aircraft, or by other authorized forms of transport

Firearms will be maintained in clean, serviceable condition. If found to be incapable of safe and accurate use, a firearm will be:

- made inoperable as described above
- tagged as unserviceable
- transferred for repair or replacement to a warehouse employee who is qualified in firearms repair and disposal

Authorized Users

Employees designated as Authorized Firearms Users will be familiar with hunting regulations and "No Shooting" areas outlined in federal and provincial regulations.

Before shooting, employees will check logging activities and industrial or recreation areas in the area. The Forest Officer will inform hunters, road crews, and other members of the public in the vicinity of any intended shooting.

Traveled Roads

Firearms will not be discharged across traveled roads unless traffic is closely controlled at each end by Forest Officers.

References

- *Criminal Code of Canada*, s. 84(2), 95(1), 106.5(1), and 98(1)(b) — *Firearms Acquisition Certificate* (FAC) exemption and definitions
- *Firearm Act*, s.134 and pursuant BC Regulations
- *Wildlife Act*, s.433 and pursuant BC Regulations

Scope

This policy covers prevention of personal injury or industrial disease for all staff.

Policy

The Ministry will provide a safe and healthy work environment for all employees. Each worksite will develop and implement a written safety program to be updated annually and monitored with measurements to prevent loss through personal injury or industrial disease. Programs will include:

- safety
- fire prevention
- occupational health and wellness

Immediate corrective action will be implemented to control or eliminate any potential hazard to the employee's safe work environment.

The Ministry's *Accident Prevention Manual* will serve as a guideline for all worksites and employees.

Costs

Funding and resources will be made available to ensure the occupational safety and health of all Ministry employees in the safe, productive performance of their duties.

Principles

The Occupational Health and Accident Prevention Program is based on the following principles:

- safety is a management objective equal in importance to all other managerial responsibilities
- safety is a line responsibility

Management Responsibility

All management and supervisory personnel are responsible for ensuring their staff are fully trained in the operation of all equipment used to perform their duties. Management and supervisory personnel must also ensure staff are in compliance with all regulatory agencies and Ministry standards in occupational safety and health. All accidents will be investigated to determine causes and a procedure will be implemented to prevent reoccurrence.

Employee Responsibility

Employees must cooperate with and contribute to the Ministry's safety programs. Efforts must be made by every employee to prevent accidental injury. All employees have a defined responsibility to work safely, which includes:

- correcting, neutralizing, and reporting hazardous or unsafe conditions or unsafe work practices
- using personal protective clothing, devices, or safety equipment as required by regulatory authority, safety standards, and procedures, or as directed by supervisors
- warning others of known hazards, or of their failure to observe proper safety procedures
- inspecting their own work areas and equipment for unsafe conditions and hazards
- reporting all accident, incidents, and 'near misses' immediately to their supervisor

References

- *Accident Prevention Manual*
- *B.C. Labour Code*
- *Canadian Shipping Act*
- Canadian Underwriters Association, Publication 10A, *Maintenance and Use of Portable Fire Extinguishers*
- *Criminal Code of Canada*
- *Dangerous Goods Regulations*, International Air Transport Association (IATA)
- *Emergency Response Guide for Dangerous Goods*, Canutec, 2nd edition
- *Gas Safety Act and Regulations*, B.C. Ministry of Labour, Safety Engineering Services Division, 1983
- *Government Employee Health Services*, Ministry of Health
- *Industrial First Aid Regulations*, Workers' Compensation Board of B.C.
- *Industrial Health and Safety Regulations*, Workers' Compensation Board of B.C.
- *Master Agreement*, between B.C. Government and B.C. Government Employees' Union (BCGEU) Article 22, and Appendix V
- Master Agreement between B.C. Government and B.C. Government Professional Employees' Association(BCGPEA) Article 27
- *Occupational Environment Regulations*, Part I, Factory Act
- *Protection Branch Pesticide Storage and Transportation Guidelines*, Ministry of Forests file no. 720-12-1, September, 1983
- *Radio Communications Act*, Industry and Science Canada
- *Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act (B.C.)*, Ministry of Transportation and Highways
- *Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act (Canada) and Regulations*, Transport Canada
- *Workers Compensation Act*, RSBC 1979

Scope

This policy covers risk management where there is exposure to potential losses associated with personnel, property, revenue, liability, and delivery of services.

Policy

Each branch, region, and district will have a strategy in place to identify and eliminate or minimize circumstances and practices which may lead to loss of personnel, revenue, physical assets and equipment, or exposure to liability.

Maintaining/ Transferring Risk

The Ministry will self-insure all losses, with the exception of losses through vehicles (ICBC), long term disability (Great West Life), volunteers (private insurance), air travel losses (private insurance), and special coverages for specific perils. Contact the Manager, Occupational Health and Accident Prevention, Human Resources Branch, or the Risk Management Branch, Treasury Board Secretariat, for confirmation of insurance coverages available.

Loss Reporting

All losses involving personnel, physical assets and equipment, or liability claims must be reported as outlined in the *Forest Service Risk Management Guidelines* (under development).

Evaluation/Monitoring

Each risk management plan must be monitored and re-evaluated at least once annually and whenever there is a new program, practice, or operational activity change.

Definition: Risk Control

Controlling a risk means eliminating the risk, reducing the probability of loss, reducing the severity of loss, or transferring the risk through contract or insurance.

References

- *Contract Administration Manual*
- *Government Management Operating Policy Manual (GMOP)*, Chap. 9
- *Forest Service Risk Management Guidelines* (under development)

Scope

The Workplace Violence Prevention policy applies to all Ministry of Forests (MoF) employees.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all employees understand their roles and responsibilities as they relate to violence prevention at the workplace. As well as, to ensure that risks of violence to employees are identified and appropriate prevention programs and/or practices are established that eliminate or minimize those risks, consistent with the requirement of the *Worker's Compensation Act* and the Standards of Conduct for Public Service Employees. The first responsibility of all employees is to promote safety and guard against harm to themselves and other employees.

Background

Ministry of Forests is committed to providing a workplace in which the respect and safety of the employees is paramount. The risk or occurrence of violent acts involving employees requires particular attention as violence undermines employees' ability to work effectively and impacts their quality of life. Any work related threats or acts of violence against employees, or their families, is unacceptable, and will not be tolerated.

Definitions

"Risk" is identified as the probability during a period of activity that a hazard will result in an incident with definable consequences.

"Violence" includes any attempted or actual exercise by any person, including another worker, of any physical force so as to cause injury to a worker and includes any express threat of violence.

"Workplace" means a place of employment, a place of work and may include the office, the field, or any place being travelled to and from the office, home or the field, or any place the worker may come in contact with the public.

Policy

It is the Ministry of Forests policy to:

- Promote a violence-free workplace for all employees;
- Respect and protect the health, safety and dignity of all employees;
- Empower employees to make and act on decisions regarding risk of violence;
- Ensure employees are aware of and follow safety practices to prevent and respond to violent incidents;
- Establish written practices to identify and address risks for each local worksite using input from all worksite employees;

- Offer critical incident debriefing and/or other support, including authorization for leave from work to consult with a physician of their choice for treatment or referral, to employees directly affected by workplace violence;
- At a minimum, comply with the Standards of Conduct for Public Service Employees, WCB Act and Regulations and applicable Collective Agreements;
- Where a ministry employee has reasonable cause to believe that there is a risk of violence, the employees will remove themselves from the risk environment.

Risk Assessment

Managers/supervisors will ensure risk assessments are conducted at the local level and develop and implement a violence prevention action plan that is appropriate for both physical and verbal types of conflict to be updated annually and monitored to prevent loss through personal injury or verbal threats. Education and training will be identified and provided for as necessary.

Incident Reporting, Investigation and Follow-up

- Employees are required to report any act or threatening statement of violence arising out of their employment, in accordance with OSH Regulation, Standards of Conduct for Public Service Employees corporate and ministry policy and ministry procedures;
- The employer in accordance with the *Workers Compensation Act*, Regulations and Ministry policy and procedures shall investigate all reports of violent incidents.

Training

On the job training must include a review of the risks of violence inherent in an employee's position, violence prevention procedures, correct response procedures, workplace emergency procedures and incident reporting procedures.

Executive Manager Responsibility (DM/ADM, Regional Executive Directors, BCTS, and HQ Directors)

- Ensure there is a ministry-wide statement of the aims and responsibilities for the local worksite;
- Ensure that the above statement is communicated to all employees at the workplace;
- Establish and measure appropriate performance standards pertaining to a Violence Prevention Action Plan.

Manager Responsibility (District/Director/BCTS/Fire Center)

- Ensure the reporting, investigating and documenting of incidents of violence are established and are in place in accordance with WCB Regulation and Ministry reporting procedures;
- Ensure a local worksite violence prevention action plan is prepared and updated as per regulation;
- Ensure risk assessments are undertaken;

- Inform staff and supervisor of the nature and extent of the risk of violence;
- Take corrective action and monitor its effectiveness;
- Ensure regular evaluation of the workplace violence prevention program (annually, after an incident or if circumstances change);
- Ensure that the worksite Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC), is consulted in accordance with the *Workers Compensation Act* and OSH Regulations;
- Ensure a risk assessment is done and that safe work procedures are developed to address existing or potential risks for each assignment under their supervision;
- Respond to media presence and/or follow-up questions relating to the incident.

Supervisor Responsibility

- Comply with reporting, investigation and documenting procedures;
- Facilitate ongoing discussion on workplace violence issues with staff, as required;
- Ensure that appropriate training and education in violence prevention procedures and response procedures is provided to staff;
- Provide input into risk assessments;
- Assist in development and updating of the local workplace violence prevention program;
- Instruct staff on procedures for prevention of violence;
- Promote and encourage reporting of violent incidents;
- Advise workers of available medical services including referrals.

Employee/Worker Responsibility

- Provide input into risk assessments;
- Attend education and training sessions when requested;
- Provide input into development of the local workplace violence prevention action plan;
- Follow established procedures for the prevention and reporting of incidents of violence;
- Report incidents of violence;
- Provide input into incident investigations;
- Be aware of critical incident debriefing or trauma counselling services available.

References

- *Standards of Conduct for Public Service Employees* – BC Public Service Agency Policy Directive 5.4

- *Preventing Workplace Violence – A Guide for the BC Public Service* – BC Public Service Agency
- *Violence in the Workplace Program Framework – BC Public Service Agency*
- *Protection of Workers from Violence in the Workplace*, between BC Government and BC Government Employees' Union (BCGEU);
- *Master Agreement*, between BC Government and BC Government Employees' Union (BCGEU) Article 22, and Appendix V
- *Master Agreement* between BC Government and BC Government Professional Employees' Association (BCGPEA) Article 27
- *Workers Compensation Act, RSBC 1996*

Resources

Risk Assessment template –
[http://www.bcpublicservice.ca/wphealth/work_enviro/prevent.htm]

Corporate workplace violence prevention information –
[http://www.bcpublicservice.ca/wphealth/work_enviro/prevent.htm]

Chapter 7 - Information Management
Table of Contents

Contents

7.1 Standard ID Codes and Symbols
7.2 Operational Systems Review
7.3 Corporate Information Custodianship

Scope

This policy contains guidelines for the development and maintenance of standard identification codes (SICs) used to exchange information among different areas of the Ministry.

Policy

Standard identification codes must be established for pieces of information that are of interest to more than one area of the Ministry.

Some areas of the Ministry use different and incompatible coding schemes to describe the same information, so it is not possible to take full advantage of data exchange capabilities until a standard code is defined and implemented.

Description of SICs

A standard identification code (SIC) is a combination of letters and/or digits that has the same meaning Ministry-wide. An SIC allows ministry information to be transmitted, stored, and retrieved quickly and efficiently from all areas of the ministry. The use of SICs helps reduce the inconsistency and confusion that results from various ministry areas using different codes for the same thing. For example, the standard Organizational Unit code represents all offices, sections, and programs within the Ministry.

The design structure of SICs and the elements and characters that comprise them must be compatible with general data administration standards, including:

- conciseness
- uniform size and format (using standard patterns)
- expandability
- ease of recognition
- automated processing capability

A code should not be developed for its own sake, but to produce greater economy and efficiency within the Ministry.

When to Use SICs

Standard identification codes will only be defined for codes that:

- significantly affect Ministry operations
- are used by multiple areas of the Ministry, or have the potential to be used by more than one area

New automated and manual systems for all program areas and activities must use authorized standard identification codes where they exist.

Approval of New SICs

New standard identification codes (and changes to existing ones) that are recommended by a SIC working group, are subject to review and authorization by the SIC Committee prior to active use. The committee reviews and authorizes SICs based on proper and reasonable code structure.

Each SIC will be sponsored by a single Branch Director, designated as the custodian for that SIS.

Refer to the *Data Administration Standards* manual for an index and listing of SICs.

References

- *Guide for the Development, Implementation and Maintenance of Standards for the Representation of Computer Processed Data Elements*, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1976/09/30
- Information Management Group Standards Manual, *Data Administration Standards*
- Ministry Policy Manual, Resource Management, 7.2, *Standard Symbols and Codes for Vegetation and Ecosystems*

Scope

This policy describes the periodic evaluation and review of operational computer systems. Operational systems are Ministry programs and applications where part or all of the processing is by computer.

Policy

The Ministry uses various computer systems which are vital to the Ministry's programs. To help maintain productivity, security, and proper controls, these systems must undergo a structured, comprehensive review on a regular basis.

Reason for Reviews

The productivity of computer systems may deteriorate over time as the administrative infrastructure changes and grows. Several factors may contribute, such as:

- change in Ministry priorities
- introduction of new programs
- technology becoming obsolete
- key personnel leaving the Ministry

Frequency of Reviews

The frequency of operational systems reviews depends on the particular system's importance and vulnerability. Timing is determined annually as part of the Ministry's long-range planning and projected fiscal year budget.

Generallly, each major operational system is reviewed every two to three years, and each minor system is reviewed every three to four years. Regardless of whether a system is classified as major or minor, all systems will come under review at a level appropriate for that system.

Review Recommendations

Reviews will identify problems and recommend appropriate adjustments and follow-up actions, such as:

- elimination of redundancy and waste
- enhancement of system
- consolidation with other functions or systems

- feasibility study
- detailed analysis
- audit

References

- *Information Management System Framework*, Treasury Board

Scope

This policy defines custodianship and describes the responsibilities of those who define, collect, or manage any corporate business *information* or corporate computer *application* (see *Definitions*).

Policy

Each discrete corporate information subject (e.g., "Opening"; "Employee"; "Asset") and each application (e.g., "Timber Tenure Administration"; "Client Management") shall be the responsibility of a single Custodian. Corporate information collection and management shall be the responsibility of Data Resource Managers.

A Custodian is accountable for:

- determining the business information and any applications required to meet the Ministry's goals;
- establishing and maintaining the standards and rules for that business information;
- managing the information and/or application as a vital Ministry resource;
- identifying responsibility for data integrity; and
- ensuring that conflicts in Ministry business needs are successfully resolved.

A Data Resource Manager is accountable for:

- ensuring high quality corporate data collection, entry, and management, to the relevant Data Custodian's standards.

Obligations

The Custodian for information or an application is responsible for:

- ensuring that client needs are understood, articulated, and enshrined in the custodial standards and applications;
- sponsoring projects to ensure the business needs of the Ministry are satisfied from a corporate perspective, utilizing and encouraging shared data wherever possible to the widest possible audience;
- understanding, and assessing as necessary, the general quality and integrity of data within their mandate, and taking steps to continually improve it;
- ensuring that training and support is available to Ministry clients of the information or application; and,
- providing solutions to problems of a business nature that may arise.

The Data Resource Manager is responsible for:

- resourcing the collection, management, and maintenance of data, to the standards set by the Data Custodian and including any requirements specified in legislation or regulations;
- identifying business requirements for data collection and management, including ensuring that the relevant Custodian(s) is/are aware;

- retaining a focus on overall Forest Service needs while collecting information, to ensure data is collected for the purpose of maximizing the ability of staff to make good decisions;
- performing quality assurance to verify the completeness, correctness, quantity, and integrity of collected data;
- allocating resources for available training for their staff as necessary, and identifying where there are training needs or deficiencies; and,
- managing how data and systems are utilized in the course of business for their office.

Managing Change

A Custodian will actively manage the implementation of changes for their area, and where their actions affect others' information resources. This includes assessing potential Ministry-wide impacts to policy, procedures, systems, and resourcing whenever there is a proposed change in one or more of those areas. Likewise, Custodians expect leaders of legislative and policy initiatives to investigate and analyze potential impacts on corporate information and application systems, well in advance of drafting changes.

Impact assessments are the joint responsibility of policy or business specialists (e.g., Resource Tenures & Engineering Branch, Forest Practices Branch, Financial Management Branch, etc.), systems specialists (Information Management Group), and representative Data Resource Managers (districts and/or regions).

Constraints

The underlying systems development environment is one of the constraining factors on a Custodian's ability to respond to change. Information Management Group remains responsible for the systems development methodology for all shared corporate applications, and the delivery of core services that maintain the integrity of corporate information. Information Management Group will also ensure that any requested changes to shared corporate information have the approval of all Custodians who have data or applications directly affected by the change.

Who is a Custodian?

A Custodian is a branch director. (District and Regional Managers are not Data Custodians because they do not have the mandate to act in a province-wide context.) The Custodian will normally be identified through consensus at the director level, or by using the Data Custodian Council as a resource. Where necessary, assignment will be made under the authority of the Executive.

Definitions

Application Custodian: The branch director who sponsors projects to develop information systems, and provides ongoing support for those systems, to enable staff to meet business needs.

Corporate application: a computer application that affects corporate information.

Corporate information: information that is of a permanent or lasting nature, is essential to the Ministry's operation, and falls within the Ministry's mandate.

Data Custodian: The branch director who establishes province-wide policy, definitions, and rules for business information within their mandate, to enable the Ministry to gain maximum value from the information.

Data Custodian Council: A strategy group made up of those Data Custodians responsible for the more substantial Ministry information resources. This core group concentrates on major issues, and chooses Ministry-wide options, thus influencing the choices that other Data Custodians will have available. The Council is also a forum for contemplating impacts of legislative or policy changes.

Data Resource Manager: A generic title for those responsible for collecting and/or managing corporate data. The most senior manager in each office (district manager, regional manager, or branch director) is ultimately accountable for ensuring corporate data collection and management to an appropriate level of quality (i.e., following relevant Data Custodians' standards), to enable effective business decisions.

IM/IT Advisory Committee: A senior management committee that provides advice and recommendations to executive on issues and plans relating to information management and information technology. It is through this group that projects are identified and funded. Membership includes district and regional management.

Ministry Client (from a Data Custodian's perspective): any agency, company, office, or individual for whom services are rendered (e.g., a Ministry employee or Ministry office; another government Ministry or agency; a forest industry company or company employee; a member of the public).

Steward: A branch director who at the request of and on behalf of a Data Custodian, can be delegated technical decisions of how the Custodian's data will be stored and retrieved (province-wide), or operational decisions of how systems processes will act on the data to maintain its technical integrity (province-wide). A Steward in the Ministry may act for another Data Custodian from the Ministry of Forests ("Internal" Steward), or may be a contact point for data from another ministry ("External" Steward).

References

- *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*
  (see Introduction to the Act for more information)
- *General Management Operating Policy*
  (Chapter 8: Information and Technology Management)
- *Quality Assurance Framework*,
  Compliance & Enforcement Branch
  (http://wwwinternal.for.gov.bc.ca/enforce/QAFrame.htm)
- *Statements of Responsibility for Data Custodians*,
  Data Custodian Council, Ministry of Forests, September 1998
  (http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/isb/datadmin/dc_lang.htm)
- *Statements of Responsibility for Data Resource Managers*,
  Data Custodian Council, Ministry of Forests, September 1998
  (http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/isb/datadmin/drm_lang.htm)
- *Systems Development Guides*
  (Guide S35: Management Guide to Custodianship —
  http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/isb/datadmin/s35.htm), Information Management Group, Ministry of Forests

Chapter 8 - Equipment and Asset Management
Table of Contents

Contents

8.1 Marine Operations
8.2 Asset Control *(to be developed)*
8.3 Vehicle Operations

Scope

This policy covers the operation and maintenance of all vessels (includes all water-born boats and craft) used in Ministry operations on tidal and non-tidal waters (including rivers).

Policy

All vessels will be operated only by certified staff in a safe and professional manner in accordance with all applicable rules and regulations. All vessels will be maintained in a safe and reliable condition by qualified tradespeople.

All vessels will be inspected at least once a year by qualified staff and the inspection report maintained in Ministry files. Non-regulated vessels will be inspected in accordance with Ministry standards.

Operator Certifications

Operators of Ministry vessels must be certified as competent by authorized Ministry staff to Ministry standards or as required by federal regulations. Staff will not operate vessels in waters they are unfamiliar with unless accompanied by a person with local knowledge.

Regulated vessels contracted for Ministry business or operations must be under the direct command of an appropriately qualified person who holds a valid licence issued by the federal government for the size of vessel under the person's command. Non-regulated vessel operators chartered for Ministry use will be required to demonstrate competency to Ministry standards.

Operator certification records will be maintained and certificates issued.

All operators will have a Radiotelephone Operators Restricted Certificate—Marine, issued by Industry Canada if operating vessels with marine channels installed.

Inspections and Certifications

All vessels chartered by the Ministry over 20 registered tons will have a valid Canadian Steamship Inspection (CSI) before being chartered. Rented non-regulated vessels will be inspected by the Ministry before being used. All vessels will carry and display all licences and certificates required by federal or provincial acts and regulations for the size of vessel and tonnage or equipment carried.

Records

Every vessel larger than 4.3 metres will have log books maintained in accordance with federal and provincial regulations. Log books must be on board at all times when the vessel is in operation.

A Ministry file for each vessel will be maintained in accordance with the Administrative Records Classification System policy and provincial and federal regulations.

Crews

All vessels will carry qualified crews and adhere to watch-keeping regulations as required by the *Canada Shipping Act* for a vessel of the tonnage being operated.

Safety

All applicable safety regulations, procedures, and requirements will be followed at all times. Ministry safety policy and procedures will be considered as the minimum. No person will operate a vessel while impaired by alcohol or any drug.

Weapons must not be carried unless authorized in accordance with Ministry policy 6.3, *Firearms—Forestry Use.*

References

- *Accident Prevention Manual*
- *Canada Collision Regulation, Canadian Modifications,* Industry Canada
- *Canada Criminal Code,* s. 249-1, 252, 253
- *Canada Shipping Act and Regulation*
- *Canadian Coast Guard Safe Boating Guide*
- Ministry Policy Manual, Revenue and Corporate Services, 6.3, *Firearms—Forestry Use*
- *Notice to Mariners*
- *Regional Operating Procedure*
- *Small Vessel Regulation*
- *Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act and Regulation*
- *Worker's Compensation Act* and *Regulation*

Scope

This policy covers the management and operation of Ministry vehicles.

Policy

The Ministry will maximize use and minimize costs through a common pooling of vehicles, private mileage, leasing and short-term rentals. Vehicles will not be assigned to individuals or used portal to portal unless approved. The Program Manager - Vehicles will approve all purchases, leases, and disposals.

Personal use of Ministry owned, rented, or leased vehicles is not allowed.

Vehicles will be maintained according to an approved maintenance plan; inspected annually if not on an approved plan, or as required by regulations. All vehicles will be identified; temporary exceptions may be authorized by Regional Managers or Branch Directors.

All vehicles will be operated in a safe, courteous, and lawful manner.

Use of Vehicles

Regional Managers or Branch Directors may allow Ministry vehicles to be used for up to 60 days by:

- other ministries and government agencies
- emergency organizations
- approved non-profit organizations, provided the vehicle is operated by a Ministry employee

Use over 60 days must be approved by the appropriate Assistant Deputy Minister.

Private Vehicles

Private vehicles must be authorized, insured, maintained, and used according to Ministry standards and General Management Operating Policy (GMOP).

Operator Responsibility

Operators must ensure that:

- the proper vehicle is used for the assigned task
- the vehicle is in safe and proper operating condition

- they hold a valid British Columbia licence for the class of vehicle being driven
- the vehicle carries permits for any accessories such as amber warning lamps, or red emergency lamps
- all mechanical problems, operating abnormalities, body damage, and repairs required are reported when returning vehicles to the pool

Operators must understand all accident reporting procedures, keep all log book entries up to date, and ensure credit cards are used appropriately.

Stand-by Authorized Use

Regional/District Managers and Branch Directors may assign vehicles to staff who are on stand-by for the sole purpose of traveling between their home and the assembly point.

Safety

Ministry safety policy and procedures will be considered a minimum. All applicable safety regulations, procedures, and requirements must be followed at all times. Operators must never drive while under the influence of alcohol or any drug which might impair their driving ability.

Firearms must not be carried unless authorized.

When driving on radio assisted roads, the road control frequency must be monitored at all times (scan mode must not be used).

Repairs

All repairs and maintenance to vehicles must be initiated using the approved purchase document. Work must be approved by a designated Ministry official.

References

- *Accident Prevention Manual*
- *General Management Operating Policy* (GMOP), Chapter 5
- Ministry Policy Manual, Revenue and Corporate Services, 6.3, *Firearms—Forestry Use*
- *Ministry Policy Statement*, I-TAS-003, I-TAS-004, I-TAS-005
- Regional Operating Procedures
- *Treasury Board Budget and Administrative Policy Manual*, Chapter 30
- Treasury Board Directive 8/79 August 16, 1978, s.13

Chapter 9 - Administrative Services
Table of Contents

Contents

9.1 Radio Communications - Systems Access
9.2 Records Management Program
9.3 Forms Management
9.6 Residential Accommodation *(to be developed)*
9.8 Security of Cabinet Documents

Scope

This policy covers authorized access to radio frequencies and systems.

Policy

Following written application, access to the Ministry of Forests' radio frequencies may be granted to:

- all government agencies for the exclusive purpose of ensuring safety of their staff when working in remote places or when an emergency arises
- air carriers engaged in air operations for Ministry programs
- contractors engaged in fire suppression activities
- any other contractor where no suitable means of communications exist. Access will be for the exclusive purpose of communicating with the Ministry.

Ministry Responsibility

The Ministry has no responsibility to provide:

- continuity of service
- extension of the operational area
- continuous monitoring of a radio system or frequency
- equipment, technical assistance, or training
- modifications to users' equipment (if modifications are required, the Ministry will make reasonable efforts to advise users of the changes)

Application Review

If an application for radio access is not approved, the applicant will be entitled to an application review by the Ministry.

Access Conditions

Authorized Access: Access will be based on the user's requirements and may be granted as follows:

- by the Regional Manager, for a period not to exceed one year and restricted to one region

- by the Director, Information Management Group, based on the recommendation of the Regional Manager(s), for a period exceeding one year or where access is required in more than one region

Air Carriers: Access will be granted only to air carriers approved by Protection Branch, Air Operations Section.

Termination of Access: Where access is no longer required, has expired, or been terminated, Ministry frequencies will be removed from all radios.

Compliance

All users will comply with:

- appropriate Department of Communications (Canada) requirements
- the Ministry's Radio System Operating Rules (see Appendix)

Failure to observe these requirements and rules may result in termination of access.

References

- *Radiocommunication Act,* Government of Canada, General Radio Regulations, Part I and Part II

Appendix

Rules

The Department of Communications (Canada) has four main rules that must be observed:

- You may not deliberately interfere with another station.
- You may not transmit superfluous signals. Unless the transmission is concerned with official business, it is superfluous.
- You may not transmit a message (conversation) containing profane or obscene words or language.
- You may not divulge or use information you overhear other than from a public broadcast.

In addition, the Ministry of Forests prohibits the discussion of official policy or personal matters over the radio.

General Instructions

Before using a radio on a Ministry of Forests' radio system, you should know and adhere to the following:

- The call sign or station name by which your station will be identified; also the call signs or names of stations with which you need to communicate.
- The operating schedule, if any, that you must keep.
- The frequency or frequencies you must use to contact other stations.

Information on these items may be obtained from the Ministry of Forests' Regional Superintendent, Electronics (SOE), located at the Regional Headquarters in Vancouver, Smithers, Prince George, Kamloops, Nelson, and Williams Lake. The SOE can also provide information on system coverage and general operating instructions.

Operators must ensure that their radio equipment is operating properly.

Any improper use of the Ministry of Forests' radio systems may result in the cancellation of the 'Letter of Authority.'

Scope

This policy describes the Records Management Program, which is the administration and control of all Ministry records.

Policy

As a valuable Ministry resource, Ministry records will be created, classified, maintained, retrieved, scheduled, and stored according to standards and procedures described in the Records Management Program and government policy.

Branches, regions, and districts will create and maintain records relating to their own functions.

Administration

The Deputy Minister has delegated authority to the Ministry Records Officer to administer records management policy as well as responsibility for:

- administration and control of all Ministry records, including the proposal of policies and procedures in related areas
- implementation, maintenance, and monitoring of records management systems and operations according to government and Ministry policy, standards, and guidelines
- liaisons with the BC Archives and Records Service concerning:
  - record classifications systems
  - semi-active records storage and retrieval
  - record schedules and disposal
  - training
- coordination with Ministry facilities and purchasing staff concerning space and filing equipment for active records
- Ministry Records Officers Council matters

Training

The Ministry Records Officer, in consultation with the Records Management Branch, will arrange for staff to be trained in the use of the Records Management Program.

Record Classification

Standardized record classification systems will be used to establish uniformity throughout the Ministry, as follows:

- Administrative Records Classification System (ARCS) — for records dealing with administration, buildings and properties, equipment and supplies, finances, personnel matters, and electronic data processing
- Operational Records Classification System (ORCS) — for records dealing with all other Ministry programs

Each record or document must be classified under one of these two systems and will bear the appropriate file number.

Disposal

Records identified as inactive will be scheduled for disposal according to the timetable applicable for each records classification. Records are disposed of under the *Document Disposal Act*.

References

- *B.C. Government's General Management Operating Manual*
- *Document Disposal Act* and pursuant B.C. Regulations
- *Evidence Act*
- *Interpretation Act*
- Ministry Policy Manual, Revenue and Corporate Services, 1.3, *Responding to Requests for Information*
- Ministry Policy Manual, Revenue and Corporate Services, 9.3, *Forms Management*
- *Systems Act*
- *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*

Scope

This policy provides guidelines for the effective management of all Ministry forms.

Policy

The use of unnecessary, non-standard, or poorly designed forms interferes with efficient administration, and creates confusion among staff, industry, and the general public. The creation and use of forms must be controlled so the administrative workload can be reduced and simplified.

The management of all forms, including development, implementation, review, deletion, and control, will be coordinated by the Information Management Group.

Objectives

For effective forms management, the Information Management Group will strive to meet the following objectives:

- minimize the number of forms necessary for Ministry operations
- control the creation and proliferation of forms, and eliminate the production of forms on photocopy machines
- prevent repetition of different forms for the same purpose, and eliminate redundancy of information on forms
- evaluate the functions and effectiveness of current and proposed forms
- ensure legality of the content of forms used as permits, licences, or in contractual documentation
- ensure forms meet the requirements of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*
- maintain a catalogue and cross-referenced index of all forms
- design new forms to ensure completeness, simple processing, and conformity with standardized requirements of the B.C. government's Visual Identity Program
- minimize printing and processing costs

- review existing forms from other Ministries and government agencies which may be adapted for use by the Ministry of Forests
- control disposal of obsolete and redundant forms

Form Numbers

All official Ministry forms will be assigned and imprinted with a form control number which is recorded in an official catalogue and index. No form without a number will be used for official Ministry business.

Forms that are required for a one-time, temporary use will be identified by a separate FS control number with a T prefix.

Form Sponsors

Each Ministry form will have a Branch Director or Regional Manager as a sponsor. The sponsor will review each form to ensure accuracy and completeness of content, and will direct procedures used for each form.

References

- *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*

Scope

This policy addresses the tracking and secure handling of Cabinet documents within the Ministry of Forests.

Definition of Cabinet Documents

Documents considered to be Cabinet documents include:

- Cabinet and Treasury Board submissions, both draft and final (signed) versions
- letters, memos, and reports to the Chair of Treasury Board and Secretary to Treasury Board
- agendas, minutes, decision letters of Cabinet and its committees
- regulations and other Orders-in-Council prior to release
- requests for legislation and draft legislation
- financial impact assessments
- memoranda regarding confidential work for the consideration of Cabinet
- briefing material, presentations, communications strategies related to Cabinet and Treasury Board submissions, findings of polls, surveys or other studies on matters, and any other documents which may be subject to Cabinet consideration.

These documents must be considered confidential and high security.

Policy

Responsibility for Security of Cabinet Documents

The Procedures for Security of Cabinet Documents directive, issued by Cabinet Planning Secretariat in January 1996, makes Deputy Ministers accountable for the security of Cabinet document handling systems in their respective ministries and Minister's offices.

The Assistant Deputy Minister, Revenue and Corporate Services, has been appointed Ministry Security Officer by the Deputy Minister, to ensure government security requirements are met.

When the Ministry is developing/drafting Cabinet documents, the originating branch is the OPR (the Office of Prime Responsibility, or the office which has primary responsibility for a category of records or holds the master copy of any record series). During this period, the originating branch is responsible for all processes and procedures for security.

Once Cabinet documents have been finalized, Cabinet Operations is the OPR for Cabinet and Planning Board submissions; Treasury Board Staff is the OPR for Treasury Board submissions.

The Ministry's Cabinet submissions will be filed in a central, secure location in Corporate Policy and Planning Branch; and the Ministry's Treasury Board submissions will be filed in a central, secure location in Financial Management Branch. Copies of submissions should not be retained in the originating branch.

All Cabinet submissions that are developed by the Ministry must be tracked by the Cabinet Document Coordinator, Corporate Policy and Planning Branch.

The tracking system will record:

- all Ministry submissions to Cabinet or Cabinet Committees
- all Ministry Orders-in-Council
- who has accessed Cabinet documents from the central files

The Cabinet Document Coordinator will report on a regular basis to the Ministry Executive Committee on the status of all submissions and Orders-in-Council.

The Cabinet Document Coordinator will maintain files of agendas, minutes, and decision letters relating to items reviewed by Cabinet and Cabinet Committees.

All Treasury Board submissions and decisions, correspondence, and reports for the Chair and/or Secretary of Treasury Board must be tracked by the Manager, Budget Services, Financial Management Branch.

The tracking system will record:

- all Ministry submissions, correspondence, and reports to the Chair and/or Secretary to Treasury Board
- who originated the Treasury Board document
- who has accessed Treasury Board documents from Financial Management Branch files

The Manager, Budget Services, will report on a regular basis the status of all Treasury Board documents.

Financial Management Branch will maintain files of decision letters relating to items reviewed by Treasury Board.

In exceptional circumstances, a copy of Ministry Cabinet or Treasury Board submissions may be provided to staff on a need-to-know basis. A record will be maintained of individuals who hold copies of submissions and each individual must acknowledge that they are responsible for its security. All such copies must be returned to the Cabinet Document Coordinator or the Manager, Budget Services, as appropriate.

Care and Custody, Duplication of Cabinet Documents

During the development of Cabinet documents, staff in originating branches must ensure that the documents are not left unattended unless locked away in secure storage, and Cabinet documents should be handled in such a manner that they cannot be read or accessed by unauthorized people.

Duplication must be limited and tracked by the originating branch. Previous drafts and copies must be destroyed when superseded by a new draft or copy of the document. Final versions should not be copied or duplicated.

Staff in originating branches must ensure that Cabinet documents intended for shredding must be disposed of by an authorized person at the end of each business day.

A copy of the final Cabinet document must be stored in Corporate Policy and Planning Branch by the Cabinet Document Coordinator, and a copy of the final Treasury Board document must be stored in Financial Management Branch.

Cabinet submissions, Treasury Board submissions, agendas, minutes, or decision letters must not be copied within the Ministry or stored in branch files.

Access to Cabinet documents and decisions, and Treasury Board documents and decisions, must be limited to those who "need to know" as identified by the Deputy Minister.

Access to Cabinet documents stored in Corporate Policy and Planning Branch will be tracked by the Cabinet Document Coordinator. Access to Treasury Board documents stored in Financial Management Branch will be tracked by the Manager, Budget Services.

Physical Security

In general, Cabinet documents should not be removed from the high security environment of the office.

The physical environment of offices in which Cabinet documents are prepared is the responsibility of the Branch Director. Branches should have appropriate locked storage; building security, particularly after hours; and access to machinery which shreds Cabinet documents to the extent that the documents can no longer be read.

Staff who transport Cabinet documents or who must work on them outside of the office are directly responsible for safeguarding the information.

Fax machines should not be used to transmit confidential documents. If it is essential for operational reasons to use fax machines, the sender and receiver of the confidential document should stand by the machines until transmission is complete, or encrypted machines can be used.

E-mail is not to be used to convey confidential information.

All personal computers must be password-protected.

Unattended computers must be logged-off or in a locked state requiring a password for re-activation.

All diskettes containing Cabinet documents must be stored in a secure and locked location and tracked in such a way that prior versions are deleted when superseded. Back-up procedures and security should be used for the current document.

Cabinet documents should not be developed or stored on a LAN and should not be transmitted electronically to other workstations.

Branches should minimize the involvement of consultants in the development of Cabinet documents. However, where this is unavoidable, all consultant contracts must contain a confidentiality clause (which includes the following key element - "The contractor will treat as confidential any information obtained as a result of the agreement unless the prior consent of the authorized Ministry representative is received"). Branches must also advise any consultants involved in the development of Cabinet documents or material for use in Cabinet deliberations of specific expectations concerning the security of Cabinet documents.

Process

Ministry staff must contact the Ministry Cabinet Document Coordinator or Manager, Budget Services, when beginning developmental work on any document which will clearly become a Cabinet or Treasury Board document so that an identifier can be assigned to the document and it can be entered into the appropriate tracking system.

Similarly, the Cabinet Document Coordinator or Manager, Budget Services, must be advised when the Ministry executive determines that matters discussed in a briefing note are likely to proceed to Cabinet, and the document should be entered on the tracking system.

The originating branch developing the Cabinet document is responsible for maintaining the tracking trail for the document in the developmental phase.

Copies of draft Cabinet documents shared with other ministries or agencies must be logged out to an individual within that other organization and tracked by the program staff developing the submission.

Recipients of logged-out copies of a draft Cabinet documents must be advised by covering memorandum to return prior versions of the documents to the originator each time a revised draft is received.

All Cabinet submissions and Treasury Board documents should bear a header or footer stating that the material is **strictly confidential**, and also the date and draft number.

Freedom of Information Requests

Information that would reveal the deliberations of Cabinet or any of its Committees, including advice, recommendations, policy considerations, draft legislation, or regulations must be withheld under section 12 of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOI Act)*.

Any requests for information under the *FOI Act* that include a Cabinet or Treasury Board document must be referred to the Ministry's Information and Privacy Section. Staff in the Information and Privacy Section, in conjunction with the Cabinet Documents Coordinator or Manager, Budget Services, will refer the requests for the release of the documents to the Premier's Office, which is solely responsible for the release of those portions of Cabinet documents that can be released.

Breach of Security

Any breaches, or suspected breaches, of security are to be reported immediately to the Ministry's Security Officer, who will subsequently inform

the Deputy Minister and the Government Security Officer.

A breach of security is deemed to have occurred when, for example, a Cabinet document has gone missing or there appears to have been unauthorized entry to, or attempts to enter, computer networks or containers storing Cabinet documents.

The Ministry's Security Officer will be responsible for investigating, and appropriately responding to security breaches.

The Deputy Minister will assess the information which may have become public through the breach and prepare for media questions.

References

Procedures for Security of Cabinet Documents directive, issued by Cabinet Planning Secretariat, January 3, 1996.

Contents

10.1 Risk Management - Business Disruption Recovery

Subject: Risk Management - Business Disruption Recovery **No**: **10.1**
Effective: 30-Apr-97
Branch: Human Resources (Emergency Preparedness)
Financial Management (Business Continuation Planning)
Signature: Gerry R. Armstrong

Scope

This policy covers risk management by the Ministry of Forests in response to and recovery from a major business disruption (e.g., from a building fire, earthquake, etc.).

Policy

The Ministry will provide for the safety of personnel, visitors on Ministry property, facilities, and equipment, and provide for the Ministry's protection from liability in the event of a major business disruption.

Each Responsibility Centre Manager will develop an Emergency Preparedness Plan and a Business Continuation Plan. Where there is more than one Responsibility Centre Manager in a building, one Manager will be designated to coordinate and integrate the plans. The Business Continuation Plan will be coordinated in a geographic location as required.

Following a business disruption, the Ministry will re-establish all business activities at the earliest opportunity.

Preparation for Business Disruptions

The preparation for and the initial response to provincial catastrophic disasters is the responsibility of the local authority (municipality, regional district, or provincial government where the disaster occurs in unorganized territory). If the local authority initiates a state of emergency, it may ask for assistance from the Provincial Emergency Program (PEP). PEP will assist by coordinating responses from other agencies.

Emergency Preparedness Plans will include proper evacuation procedures, which will provide instructions to staff and visitors.

Structured Business Continuation Plans will be developed by each responsibility centre, or group of responsibility centres, identifying:

- critical Ministry functions, in order of priority, to be restored following a business disruption
- who is responsible for the restoration of the identified critical Ministry functions
- what resources are available or required for the restoration of critical Ministry functions

Copies of the plans will be kept offsite in a secure location, with backup personnel identified.

Responsibility Centre Managers will provide the necessary emergency preparedness resources, key personnel, and alternate business continuation processes. These will be examined and tested annually (paper exercise), or more frequently when any changes have been made to existing plans.

Responding to Business Disruptions

The Responsibility Centre Manager will immediately activate the Emergency Preparedness Plan. In buildings with more than one Responsibility Centre Manager (e.g., 595 Pandora Avenue), agreement will be reached, in advance, as to which Responsibility Centre Manager will activate the Emergency Preparedness Plan.

The health and safety of staff and visitors are of paramount concern.

Local municipal authorities such as fire, police, and ambulance services are responsible for providing public safety and services. All Ministry staff are advised to cooperate with the municipal public safety agencies.

Business Continuation After Disruption

Business Continuation Plans will be activated after a business disruption at the direction of the Responsibility Centre Manager or the local command team leader.

Prior to the re-occupation of any Ministry facility following a business disruption, directors and managers must ensure these properties are safe for human occupancy. This will be coordinated by local Financial Management Branch personnel in consultation with the B.C. Building Corporation (BCBC) and/or local engineering consultants.

As part of the Business Continuation Plan, critical incident stress management (CISM) assistance through either mental health professionals and/or trained peer support persons will be available for all staff exposed to trauma.

Definition: Responsibility Centre Manager

For this policy, Responsibility Centre Manager is defined as Regional Manager, District Manager, and Branch Director.

References

- *Personnel Management Policy and Procedures Manual*
- Ministry of Forests Policy Manual, Revenue and Corporate Services, 6.1, *Critical Incident Stress Management Program*

Index entries are keyed to policy numbers, not page numbers. Each number is prefaced by a letter indicating in which binder the policy can be found, "**M**" for the Revenue and Corporate Services binder and "**R**" for the Resource Management binder.

A

aboriginal rights, protection of · R15.1
accident prevention · M6.4
accounts receivable
  collection on outstanding · M3.2
  lost remittances · M3.8
  provision for bad and doubtful accounts · M3.4
  write off or remission · M3.5
Administration Remedies Regulation
  Determinations · R16.10, R16.10
Administrative Review and Appeal Procedure (Forest Act) Regulation
  Determinations · R16.10, R16.10
Administrative Review and Appeal Procedure (Forest Practices) Regulation
  Administrative Reviews · R16.22, R16.22
  Determinations · R16.10, R16.10
Administrative Reviews · R16.22, R16.22
advertising
  Bid Proposal Sales Program · R14.1
  woodlot licences · R8.9
Advertising Deposits and Disposition Regulation
  Christmas Tree Permit · R8.20
  Cruise based sales · R8.16
  s.4, Woodlot licence · R8.9
  Timber Sale Licences · R14.1
air carrier directory · R9.3
air photo interpreters
  certification · R1.2
  qualifications · R1.2
  responsibilities · R1.2
air quality · R9.2
Air Regulation and Aeronautics Act · R9.3
appeals · M4.4
applicants
  commensurability for grazing tenure · R3.10
  cruise based sales · R8.16
  grazing vacancy
    ratings of · R3.1
    unqualified · R3.1
  hay cutting vacancy
    ratings of · R3.2
    unqualified · R3.2
  non-use · R3.8
appraisal estimates · *also see stumpage appraisals*
appraisal estimates, derivation of
  complexity of · R11.1
  formula stability · R11.1
  independent variables · R11.1
  zonal · R11.1
appraisals · *see stumpage appraisals*
appurtenant lands R3.1, R3.5, R3.6, R3.9
  definition · R3.7, R3.10
ARCS and ORCS record classification
  general · M9.2
  ticketing files · R16.6, R16.6
audit
  average market value · R11.4
  internal · M2.1
  internal forest practices · R17.4
  seed orchards and production facilities · R2.1
average market value audit · R11.4
aviation management · R9.3

B

backlog management · R2.22
bankrupt debtors · M3.5
Bid Proposal Sales Program · R14.1
blister rust disease · R2.4
Boom Chain Brand Act
  Prosecutions, s. 9 · R16.19, R16.19
  s. 9, Prosecutions · R16.19, R16.19
budget allocations/reallocations · M3.10
budget management · M3.10
budget reviews · M3.10
Business Continuation Plans · M10.1
business disruption preparation and response · M10.1
business meeting accommodation · M3.9
business meeting expenses
  approval · M3.9
  classes · M3.9

headquarters · M3.9

C

Cabinet documents · M9.8
Canada Shipping Act · M8.1
Canadian Environmental Protection Act · R9.2
career development · *see employee development*
career training · *see employee training*
certification for firearms use · M6.3
certification of air photo interpreters · *see air photo interpreters*
certification of Logging Residue Surveyor
  coast/interior endorsement · R11.5
  suspension and cancellation · R11.5
Christmas Tree Permits
  notice inviting applications for · R8.20
Christmas Tree Program
  administration · R8.20
  Manifest Books · R8.20
  permit replacement · R8.21
  permits · R8.20
Christmas Tree Regulation
  Christmas Tree Permit Replacement · R8.21
  Christmas Tree Program Administration · R8.20
CISMP · *see Critical Incident Stress Management Program*
classification program, human resources · M4.4, M4.3, M4.2, M4.2
client identification number
  assigning client numbers · M3.1
  for corporation · M3.1
  for individual · M3.1
  legal name change · M3.1
client number · *see client identification number*
clients, definition · M3.1
codes and symbols · *see standard identification codes and symbols*
collections procedures · M3.2
collections, outstanding accounts receivable · M3.2
commensurability
  evaluation of · R3.10
  exceptions · R3.10
  maintenance of · R3.10
commercial horse operators
  allocation of vacancy · R3.3
  exceptions · R3.3
  stallions · R3.3
commercial thinning · R2.13
commitments of funds · M3.10
compliance and enforcement
  inspections · R17.2
  monitoring · R17.3
  risk assessment for operational activities · R17.1
cone and seed
  collection · R2.2
  costs · R2.2
  responsibilities · R2.2
  services · R2.2
confidentiality of valuation data · R12.3, R11.6, R11.4, R11.3
conflict of interest, Forest Revenue Inspectors · R12.3
contract management · M3.12
contracts · M3.12
contraventions, investigation of · R16.6, R16.6
Cooperative Forestry Corrections Program
  funding and revenue · R2.3
  local agreements · R2.3
  Ministry responsibilities · R2.3
  types of work · R2.3
corporate information · *see custodianship of Ministry information*
Criminal Code of Canada · R16.6, R16.6
  Prosecutions · R16.19, R16.19
Critical Incident and Stress Management Program
  business disruption follow-up · M10.1
  definition · M6.1
  demonstrations and sit-ins · M1.5
  funding · M6.1
  target group · M6.1
Crown land
  backlog management · R2.22
  forage seeding of · R2.7
  woodlot licence boundary revisions · R8.17
Crown range improvements
  funding · R3.4
  obligation of tenure holders · R3.4
  removal of · R3.4
  repair and maintenance · R3.4
cruise based sales · R8.16
custodianship of Ministry information · M7.3, M1.3
  duties of custodian · M7.3
Cutblock and Road Review Regulation · R8.22
cutblocks, residue and waste measurement of · R11.5
cutting authority · R8.1

D

debtors · M3.5
debtor's log transaction · M3.2
demonstrations on Ministry property · M1.5
Deposits and Rates for Christmas Tree Permits Regulation · R8.20
deposits of public money · *see public money*
determinations · R16.10, R16.10
direct seeding · R2.10
disclosure of information · M1.3
discrimination and harassment in the workplace · M4.9
dishonoured cheques
  interest · M3.7

replacements for · M3.7
Document Disposal Act · M9.2

E

ecological reserve proposals
description · R7.1
Ecological Reserves Unit · R7.1
preparation of · R7.1
Ecological Reserves Act · R7.1
education leave for employees · M5.6
Emergency Preparedness Plans · M10.1
employee development program
definition · M5.2
eligibility for leave · M5.2
subsidies · M5.2
employee education leave · M5.6
employee lateral transfer · *see lateral transfer*
employee performance · M5.5
employee recognition · M5.4
employee safety and health · M6.4
employee safety during demonstrations · M1.5
employee safety, risk management · M10.1
employee training
approval · M5.1
seizure procedures · R16.15, R16.15
ticketing procedures · R16.11, R16.11
time and costs · M5.1
employees, excluded management · M4.6
employment, conditions of · M4.1
Enforcement Action, Administrative Review, and Appeals system (ERA) · R16.6, R16.6
Evidence Act · M9.2
excluded management employees · M4.6
expenditures, Ministry · M3.10

F

fees
collection of · R13.4
exemptions · R.13.4
for release of information · M1.3
fees and licences
annual review responsibilities · M3.3
changes to · M3.3
review and approval · M3.3
setting rates · M3.3
Financial Administration Act · R11.6, M3.6, M3.4
Charging for services for use of property, s.39 · M3.3
Remissions, s.16 · M3.5
Revenue administration and control · R12.4
s.14, Write-off of assets and uncollectible debts · M3.5
s.16, Remissions · M3.5
s.39, Charging for services for use of property · M3.3
Write-off of assets and uncollectible debts, s.14 · M3.5
financial reviews · M3.10
financial signing authority
payment responsibilities · M3.6
receiving responsibilities · M3.6
restricted spending · M3.6
revenue responsibilities · M3.6
spending responsibilities · M3.6
fire law enforcement · R9.1
fire management · *see wildfire management*
fire prevention · R9.1
Firearm Act · M6.3
firearms, training · M6.3
firearms, use of · M6.3
firewood collection areas · R8.11
firewood cutting · R8.11
flight records · R9.3
flying legislation · R9.3
forage seeding of disturbed land · R2.7
forecasts, budget · M3.10
Forest · 1
Forest Act
Allowable annual cut, s.7(3) · R8.1
Amount of royalty or stumpage, s.81 · R11.2
Application, s.129.1 · R2.6
Applications, s.41 · R8.9, R8.8, R8.7
Assessment of potential, s.3 · R4.3
Authorization of Forest Officers · R16.2, R16.2
Christmas Tree Permit Replacement, s.46.1 · R8.21
Christmas Tree Program Administration, s. 1, 46.1 · R8.20
Commercial thinning · R2.13
Cone and seed, s. 158(2)(s) · R2.2
Consent to transfer, s.50 · R8.8
Content of forest licence, s.12(i) · R11.5
Content of timber licence, s.25(i) · R11.5
Content of timber sale licence, s.17(f) · R11.5
Content of tree farm licence, s.28 · R1.1
Content of tree farm licence, s.28(1)(d)(ii) · R4.2
Content of tree farm licence, s.28(1)(n) · R11.5
Content of woodlot licence, s.42 · R8.9, R8.8, R8.7
Cruise based sales, s.85 · R8.16
Cut control, s.55 · R8.1
Deletions and reductions, s.60(5-7) · R3.4
Designation and authorization of Forest Officials · R16.3, R16.3
Designation of Forest Officers · R16.1, R16.1
Determinations · R16.10, R16.10
Duty of licence holders respecting basic silviculture, s.129.3 · R2.6
Foreiture of timber, chattels, hay, etc. · R16.15, R16.15
Forest land, s.4 · R4.3
Form of agreements, s.10 · M1.3
Free use permit, s.45 · R8.12, R8.11
Identification of Forest Officers and Forest Officials · R16.5, R16.5

Interpretation, s.1 · R8.7. R8.9
Inventory of land and forests, s.2 · R4.3
investigations · R16.6. R16.6
Issuance and content of free use permit, s.46 · R8.12. R8.11
Lien, s.141 · M3.4
Marine log brand, s.67 · R13.2
Marking with brand, s.68 · R13.2
Metric scale, s.74 · R13.1
Monitoring · R17.3
Notice inviting applications for Christmas Tree Permits, s.1, 46.1 · R8.20
Offence, s.159 · R13.3
Offence, s.159(a) · R11.3
Offence, s.159(f) · R12.3. R11.3
Person acquiring timber responsible for payment, s.131 · M3.2
Prosecutions, s. 159-163 · R16.19. R16.19
Rate of royalty or stumpage, s.82 · R11.2
Records and returns, s.136 · M3.2
Records and returns, s.149 · M1.3
Records and returns, s.149(1) · R11.3
Records and returns, s.149(2) · R11.3
Recovery of money, s.130 · M3.2
Re-examination, s.79 · R13.4
Removal permit, s.132 · M3.2
Replacement, s.43 · R8.10. R8.9. R8.8. R8.7
s.1, Interpretation · R8.9. R8.7
s.2, Inventory of land and forests · R4.3
s.3, Assessment of potential · R4.3
s.4, Forest land · R4.3
s.5.1, Wilderness areas · R4.3
s.7(3), Allowable annual cut · R8.1
s.7.1, Tree farm licence information · R1.1
s.10, Form of agreements · M1.3
s.12(i), Content of forest licence · R11.5
s.16, Timber Sale Licence · R2.13
s.17(f), Content of timber sale licence · R11.5
s.21, Timber Sale Licences · R14.1
s.25(i), Content of timber licence · R11.5
s.28(1)(d)(ii), Content of tree farm licence · R4.2
s.28(1)(n), Content of tree farm licence · R11.5
s.28, Content of tree farm licence · R1.1
s.41, Applications · R8.9. R8.8. R8.7
s.42, Content of woodlot licence · R8.9. R8.8. R8.7
s.43, Replacement · R8.10. R8.9. R8.8. R8.7
s.45, Free use permit · R8.12. R8.11
s.46, Issuance and content of free use permit · R8.12. R8.11
s.50, Consent to transfer · R8.8
s.55, Cut control · R8.1
s.60(5-7), Deletions and reductions · R3.4
s.65, Timber marks · R13.2
s.67, Marine log brand · R13.2
s.68, Marking with brand · R13.2
s.73, Timber to be scaled · R13.4. R13.1
s.73(1), Timber to be scaled · R13.2
s.73–80, Timber scaling · R13.3
s.74, Metric scale · R13.1
s.75, Scale return · R13.1
s.76, Scaling costs · R11.6
s.78, Scaling · R13.4
s.79, Re-examination · R13.4
s.80, Suspension and cancellation · R13.4
s.81, Amount of royalty or stumpage · R11.2
s.81, Settlement of indebtedness · M3.2
s.82, Rate of royalty or stumpage · R11.2
s.84, Stumpage rate determined · R11.2
s.85, cruise based sales · R8.16
s.129.1, Application · R2.6
s.129.3, Duty of licence holders respecting basic silviculture · R2.6
s.130, Recovery of money · M3.2
s.131, Person acquiring timber responsible for payment · M3.2
s.132, Removal permit · M3.2
s.136, Records and returns · M3.2
s.138, stopping vehicles · R16.7. R16.7
s.141 · M3.4
s.141, Lien · M3.4
s.149, Records and returns · M1.3
s.149(1), Records and returns · R11.3
s.149(2), Records and returns · R11.3
s.151(2)(j) & (k), Seed orchards and production facilities · R2.1
s.158(2)(s), Cone and seed · R2.2
s.159, Offence · R13.3
s.159(a), Offence · R11.3
s.159(f), Offence · R12.3. R11.3
s.159-163, Prosecutions · R16.19. R16.19
Scale return, s.75 · R13.1
Scaling costs, s.76 · R11.6
Scaling, s.78 · R13.4
Seed orchards and production facilities, s.151(2)(j) & (k) · R2.1
Seedling supply and distribution · R2.23
Settlement of indebtedness, s.81 · M3.2
Stopping vehicles, s.138 · R16.7. R16.7
Stumpage rate determined, s.84 · R11.2
Suspension and cancellation, s.80 · R13.4
Ticketing · R16.11. R16.11
Timber marks, s.65 · R13.2
Timber Sale Licence, s.16 · R2.13
Timber Sale Licence, s. 21 · R14.1
Timber scaling, s.73–80 · R13.3
Timber to be scaled, s.73 · R13.4. R13.1
Timber to be scaled, s.73(1) · R13.2
Tree farm licence information, s. 7.1 · R1.1
Wilderness areas, s.5.1 · R4.3
Woodlot licence boundary revisions, s. 1, 41, 42, 43 · R8.17
Woodlot licence Crown land area increases, s.1, 41,

42, 43 · R8.18
forest fire management · *see wildfire management*
Forest Fire Prevention and Suppression Regulation
Burning regulation, s. 25 · R9.5, R9.1
Compensation, s. 36 · R9.1
Compensation, s. 37 · R9.1
Fires for disposal of waste, s. 23 · R9.5
Fires not permitted, s. 24 · R9.5, R9.1
Industrial activities, s. 20 · R9.1
Prosecutions, s. 41 · R16.19, R16.19
s. 20, Industrial activities · R9.1
s. 23, Fires for disposal of waste · R9.5
s. 24, Fires not permitted · R9.5, R9.1
s. 25, Burning regulation · R9.5, R9.1
s. 36, Compensation · R9.1
s. 37, Compensation · R9.1
s. 41, Prosecutions · R16.19, R16.19
forest health
cooperations with other agencies · R10.1
methods · R10.1
Forest Health, s. 22 · R10.1
forest landscape management
guidelines · R4.2
responsibilities · R4.2
visual quality objectives · R4.2
Forest Officers
authorization · R16.2, R16.2
designation · R16.1, R16.1
determinations · R16.10, R16.10
identification · R16.5, R16.5
stopping vehicles · R16.7, R16.7
ticketing · R16.11, R16.11
Forest Officials
designation and authorization · R16.3, R16.3
determinations · R16.10, R16.10
identification · R16.5, R16.5
stopping vehicles · R16.7, R16.7
ticketing · R16.11, R16.11
Forest Practices Code of British Columbia Act
Abating or removing a fire hazard, s. 81 · R9.5
Administrative Reviews, s.127, 128 · R16.22, R16.22
amendments to cutting and road permits, timber sale licences, and operational plans, s. 225, 226 · R8.22
Approval of range use plans, s. 41 · R2.18
backlog management, s. 1 · R2.22
backlog management, s. 14 · R2.22
backlog management, s. 23 · R2.22
backlog management, s. 232 · R2.22
backlog management, s. 31 · R2.22
Collecting and analyzing data, s. 17(3) · R10.1
commercial thinning · R2.13
Compensation, s. 95 · R9.1
Cone and seed, s. 209(2)(c) · R2.2
Cone and seed, s.70(4)(c) · R2.2
Consistency with other Acts, s. 125 · R10.2
designation and authorization of Forest Officials · R16.3, R16.3
determinations · R16.10, R16.10
Direct seeding, s. 70 · R2.10
Fire control facilities, equipment, and personnel, s. 94 · R9.1
Fire control, s. 89 · R9.1
Five year silviculture plans, s. 25 · R2.18
forfeiture of timber, chattels, hay, etc. · R16.15, *R16.15*
Giving effect to operational plans, s. 40 · R2.18
Government fire control, s. 89 · R9.5
identification of Forest Officers and Forest Officials · R16.5, R16.5
Insect and disease control, s. 106 · R10.2, R10.1, R2.4
Interpretive recreation sites, s. 205 · R4.1
investigations · R16.6, R16.6
Issuing burning permits, s. 77 · R9.5
monitoring · R17.3
Obligation of person starting fire, s. 88 · R9.5
Order to leave area, s. 85 · R9.1
Prosecutions, s. 143-158 · R16.19, R16.19
Protection of recreation resources, s. 105 · R4.1
Protection of the environment, s. 45 · R9.5, R9.2
Range, s.74 · 3.4R
Recreation site agreements, s. 170 · R4.1
Recreation site development and maintenance, s. 7 · R4.1
Recreation sites, s. 6 · R4.1
Restricted area, s. 84 · R9.1
s. 1, backlog management · R2.22
s. 105, Protection of recreation resources · R4.1
s. 106, Insect and disease control · R10.2, R10.1, R2.4
s. 125, Consistency with other Acts · R10.2
s. 14, backlog management · R2.22
s. 143-158, Prosecutions · R16.19, R16.19
s. 17(3), Collecting and analyzing data · R10.1
s. 170, Recreation site agreements · R4.1
s. 2, Wilderness area management · R4.3
s. 205, Interpretive recreation sites · R4.1
s. 209(2)(c), Cone and seed · R2.2
s. 22, Silviculture prescriptions · R2.18
s. 225, 226, amendments to cutting and road permits, timber sale licences, and operational plans · R8.22
s. 23, backlog management · R2.22
s. 232, backlog management · R2.22
s. 25, Five year silviculture plans · R2.18
s. 31, backlog management · R2.22
s. 40, Giving effect to operational plans · R2.18
s. 41, Approval of range use plans · R2.18
s. 45, Protection of the environment · R9.5, R9.2
s. 50, Use of planned fire · R9.5
s. 6, Recreation sites · R4.1
s. 7, Recreation site development and maintenance · R4.1
s. 70(4)(c), Cone and seed · R2.2
s. 70, Direct seeding · R2.10

s. 76, Use of open fires · R9.5. R9.1
s. 77, Issuing burning permits · R9.5
s. 78, Use of burning permits · R9.5
s. 81, Abating or removing a fire hazard · R9.5
s. 84, Restricted area · R9.1
s. 85, Order to leave area · R9.1
s. 88, Obligation of person starting fire · R9.5
s. 89, Fire control · R9.1
s. 89, Government fire control · R9.5
s. 94, Fire control facilities, equipment, and personnel · R9.1
s. 95, Compensation · R9.1
s.101, Unauthorized hay storage or range development · 3.4R
s.108, 109, stopping vehicles · R16.7. R16.7
s.127, 128, Administrative Reviews · R16.22. R16.22
s.170(2)(a), Seed orchards and production facilities · R2.1
s.210(2)(c), Seed orchards and production facilities · R2.1
s.70(4)(c), Seed orchards and production facilities · R2.1
s.74, Range · 3.4R
s.98, trespassing livestock · 3.5R
Seed orchards and production facilities, s.70(4)(c), 170(2)(a), and 210(2)(c) · R2.1
Seedling supply and distribution · R2.23
Senior Officials · R16.4. R16.4
silviculture operational plans · R2.20
Silviculture prescriptions, s. 22 · R2.18
silviculture treatment and reporting · R2.19
stopping vehicles, s.108, 109 · R16.7. R16.7
ticketing · R16.11. R16.11
trespassing livestock, s.98 · 3.5R
Unauthorized hay storage or range development, s.101 · 3.4R
Use of burning permits, s. 78 · R9.5
Use of open fires, s. 76 · R9.5. R9.1
Use of planned fire, s. 50 · R9.2
Wilderness area management, s. 2 · R4.3
forest practices, internal audit · R17.4
forest products, special · R8.12
Forest Recreation Regulation
determinations · R16.10. R16.10
Prosecutions, s. 19 · R16.19. R16.19
s. 19, Prosecutions · R16.19. R16.19
Forest Revenue Inspector
authority · R12.2
enforcement · R12.2
Forest Revenue Inspector Team Code of Conduct · R12.3
Forest Service emblem · M1.1
Forest Service Road Use Regulation
Prosecutions , s. 13 · R16.19. R16.19
s. 13, Prosecutions · R16.19. R16.19
Forest Tenure Administration System (FTAS) · R16.6. R16.6
forfeiture of timber, chattels, hay, etc. · R16.15. R16.15
form sponsors · M9.3
forms management · M9.3
free use permit · *see permit, free use*
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act · R12.3. R11.6. R11.4. R11.3. R11.3. M9.3. M9.2. M7.3. M3.1
Cabinet documents · M9.8
requests for information · M1.3

G

grazing fees, reduction of · R3.8
grazing permits · R3.1
grazing tenure · R3.10. R3.8. R3.6. R3.3. R3.1
grazing vacancy
advertising · R3.1
determination of · R3.1
exceptions · R3.1
guide outfitters · *see commercial horse operators*

H

harassment and discrimination in the workplace · M4.9
Harvest Data Base System · R7.2
harvesting authority amendments · R8.22
hay cutting tenure · R3.2
hay cutting vacancy
advertising · R3.2
determination · R3.2
exceptions · R3.2
HDBS · *see Harvest Data Base System*
horse logging · *see commercial horse operators*
hosting business events · M3.9

I

improvements, Crown range · *see Crown range improvements*
Industrial Health and Safety Regulation · R10.2. R9.3. R9.1
information, Ministry, custody of · M7.3
information, release of · M1.3
information, requests for · M1.3
injury · *see employee safety*
inspections, operational activities · R17.2
integrated resource management · R3.9
Integrated Silviculture Information System (ISIS) · R16.6. R16.6
internal audit · *see audit, internal*
internal forest practices audit · R17.4
Interpretation Act · M9.2

investigations · R16.6. R16.6

J

job classification · *see classification program, human resources*
job descriptions · M4.4. M4.3
job evaluation
committees · M4.2
performance review · M5.5
Junior Forest Warden Program · M5.3

L

Land Act · R3.4
land and resource management prescriptions · R9.5
land exchanges and deletions · R8.8
lateral transfer from severely isolated locations
approval · M4.1
interviews · M4.1
qualified employees · M4.1
relocation costs · M4.1
leave of absence · M5.2
licence, woodlot
competition, evaluation, award · R8.9
Crown land area increases · R8.18
minor revisions to boundaries · R8.17
private land exchanges/deletions · R8.8
program · see Woodlot Licence Program
replacement · R8.10
licences · R2.7
administration · R3.9
commercial thinning · R2.13
grazing · R3.1
hay cutting · R3.2
seed orchards and production facilities · R2.1
suspension/cancellation warning · M3.2
timber sale · R2.13
timber sale, amendments to · R8.22
tree farm · R1.1
Limitations Act · M3.5. M3.4
Livestock Act · R3.5. R3.1
Livestock Brand Act · R3.5
livestock ownership and control
branding or marking · R3.5
inspection of livestock · R3.5
leased livestock · R3.5
overwintering · R3.6
proof of · R3.5
log sales · R11.4
Log Salvage Regulation for the Vancouver Log Salvage District
Prosecutions, s. 21 · R16.19. R16.19
s. 21, Prosecutions · R16.19. R16.19
loss, risk management · M6.5
lumber/chip sales · R11.4

M

Major Licensee Silviculture Information System (MLSIS) · R16.6. R16.6
marine operations · M8.1
marine operator certification · M8.1
media contact during demonstrations · M1.5
media relations · *see news media relations*
Ministry of Forests Act
authorization of Forest Officers · R16.2. R16.2
Christmas Tree Permit Replacement, s.4 · R8.21
Christmas Tree Program Administration, s. 4 · R8.20
commercial thinning, s.8 · R2.13
Five year resource program, s.8 · R2.7
Ministry constituted, s.1(3)(a) · M1.2
Purposes and functions of ministry, s.4 · R9.1
Purposes and functions of Ministry, s.4 · R8.12. R8.11. R8.10. R8.8. R8.7. R2.4
Purposes and functions of ministry, s.4(b) · R10.1. R9.5
Purposes and functions of Ministry, s4 · R8.9
revenue administration and control · R12.4
s. 2(4), 2(5), Senior Officials · R16.4. R16.4
s.1(3)(a), Ministry constituted · M1.2
s.4(b), Purposes and functions of ministry · R10.1. R9.5
s.4, Purposes and functions of ministry · R9.1
s.4, Purposes and functions of Ministry · R8.12. R8.11. R8.10. R8.8. R8.7. R2.4
s.4, Purposes, and functions of Ministry · R8.9
s.8, commercial thinning · R2.13
s.8, Five year resource program · R2.7
Senior Officials, s. 2(4), 2(5) · R16.4. R16.4
Woodlot licence boundary revisions, s.4 · R8.17
Woodlot licence Crown land area increases, s.4 · R8.18
Ministry Policy Manual
development and revision · R18.1
Ministry vehicles · *see vehicles, Ministry*
monitoring, Ministry processes · R17.3

N

National Transportation Act and Air Transportation Regulation · R9.3
news media relations · M1.1
news releases · M1.1
non-use of grazing rights · R3.8
Notice of Determination · R16.10. R16.10

O

occupation of Ministry property · M1.5
Occupational Health and Accident Prevention Program · M6.4

Offence Act · R16.6. R16.6. R12.3. R3.4
Prosecutions · R16.19. R16.19
ticketing · R16.11. R16.11
Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation
Smoke management · R9.2
operational activities
inspections · R17.2
risk assessment · R17.1
Operational Planning Regulation
commercial thinning · R2.13
Part 6, Stand management prescriptions · R2.4
s. 41, Species selection · R10.1
silviculture operational plans · R2.20
silviculture treatment and reporting · R2.19
Species selection, s. 41 · R10.1
Stand management prescriptions, Part 6 · R2.4
Vegetation management · R2.18
operational plans, amendments to · R8.22
operational systems review · M7.2
ORCS · *see ARCS and ORCS record classification*
overwintering of authorized livestock
determination of requirements · R3.6
non-use authorization · R3.6
waiver · R3.6

P

packers · *see commercial horse operators*
performance planning and review, human resources · M5.5
permit, free use
firewood cutting · R8.11
permits
administration · R3.9
Christmas Tree · R8.21. R8.20
commercial thinning · R2.13
cutting, amendments to · R8.22
Forest Service · R9.2
grazing. · R3.1
hay cutting · R3.2
removal · M3.2
road, amendments to · R8.22
Pest Control Products Act · R10.2
Pesticide Control Act
Direct seeding · R2.10
Pesticide regulation and use · R10.2
pesticide regulation and use · R10.2
pesticides · R2.10
PHSP · *see Pre-Harvest Silviculture Prescriptions*
Plant Protection Act · R10.1
Plant Quarantine Act · R10.1
policy introduction and amendment · R18.1
position classification · *see classification program, human resources*
Pre-Harvest Silviculture Prescriptions · R10.1. R2.6
prescribed fire · R9.5
press releases · *see news releases*
prosecutions · R16.19. R16.19
protesters · M1.5
public money · M3.8
deposits, time limits for · M3.8
payment on account · M3.8
Public Service Act
Administrative Reviews · R16.22. R16.22
public, release of information to · M1.3

R

radio communications, systems access
Ministry responsibilities · M9.1
rules · M9.1
Radiocommunication Act, Gov't of Canada, *General Radio Regulations* · M9.1
Range Act
Administration of grazing lease, s.4 · R2.7
Agreements, s.18 · R3.4
Applications, s.10 · R3.2. R3.1
authorization of Forest Officers · R16.2. R16.2
Cancellation, s.35 · R3.10. R3.8. R3.7. R3.5
Compensation for deletions, s.27 · R3.4
Compliance with *Livestock Act*, s.15 · R3.5
Consent to transfer, s.20 · R3.7
Deletion of area, s.26 · R3.2. R3.1
designation and authorization of Forest Officials · R16.3. R16.3
designation of Forest Officers · R16.1. R16.1
determinations · R16.10. R16.10
Fees, s.19 · R3.8
forfeiture of timber, chattels, hay, etc. · R16.15. R16.15
Form of compensation, s.29 · R3.2. R3.1
Grazing licence, s.5 · R3.10. R3.9. R3.7. R3.6. R3.5. R3.1. R2.7
Grazing permit, s.6 · R3.10. R3.9. R3.7. R3.6. R3.5. R3.3. R3.2. R3.1. R2.7
Hay cutting licence, s.8 · R3.10. R3.9. R3.7. R3.2
Hay cutting permit, s.9 · R3.10. R3.9. R3.7
identification of Forest Officers and Forest Officials · R16.5. R16.5
investigations · R16.6. R16.6
monitoring · R17.3
One or more applications, s.11 · R3.8. R3.1
Proposals, s.12 · R3.2. R3.1
Prosecutions , s. 47 · R16.19. R16.19
Range director, s.39(2)(b) · R3.6
Range director, s.50(2)(d) · R3.4
Regional manager or district manager to grant licences and permits, s.3 · R2.7
s. 47, Prosecutions · R16.19. R16.19
s.10, Applications · R3.2. R3.1

s.11, One or more applications · R3.8. R3.1
s.12, Proposals · R3.2. R3.1
s.15, Compliance with *Livestock Act* · R3.5
s.18, Agreements · R3.4
s.19, Fees · R3.8
s.20, Consent to transfer · R3.7
s.26, Deletion of area · R3.2. R3.1
s.27, Compensation for deletions · R3.4
s.29, Form of compensation · R3.2. R3.1
s.3, Regional manager or district manager to grant licences and permits · R2.7
s.31, Suspension by regional manager or district manager · R3.8. R3.5
s.35, Cancellation · R3.10. R3.8. R3.7. R3.5
s.39(2)(b), Range director · R3.6
s.4, Administration of grazing lease · R2.7
s.5, Grazing licence · R3.10. R3.9. R3.7. R3.6. R3.5. R3.1. R2.7
s.50(2)(d), Range director · R3.4
s.6, Grazing permit · R3.10. R3.9. R3.7. R3.6. R3.5. R3.3. R3.2. R3.1. R2.7
s.7, Temporary grazing permits · R3.10. R3.9. R3.7
s.8, Hay cutting licence · R3.10. R3.9. R3.7. R3.2
s.9, Hay cutting permit · R3.10. R3.9. R3.7
Suspension by regional manager or district manager, s.31 · R3.8. R3.5
Temporary grazing permits, s.7 · R3.10. R3.9. R3.7
ticketing · R16.11. R16.11
range improvements · *see Crown range improvements*
Range Practices Regulation
Prosecutions, s. 10 · R16.19. R16.19
s. 10, Prosecutions · R16.19. R16.19
s. 8, Tagging · R3.5
Tagging, s. 8 · R3.5
Range Regulation
Advertisement of licences and permits, s.3 · R3.2. R3.1
Application, s.7 · R3.2
Applications for grazing licences and permits, s.4 · R3.10. R3.9. R3.8. R3.6. R3.3. R3.1
Applications for hay cutting licences and permits, s.5 · R3.9. R3.6. R3.3. R3.2
Further information, s.6 · R3.1
Rents and fees, s.10 · R3.8
s.10, Rents and fees · R3.8
s.11, Transfers · R3.10. R3.7
s.3, Advertisement of licences and permits · R3.2. R3.1
s.4, Applications for grazing licences and permits · R3.10. R3.9. R3.8. R3.6. R3.3. R3.1
s.5, Applications for hay cutting licences and permits · R3.9. R3.6. R3.3. R3.2
s.6, Further information · R3.1
s.7, Application · R3.2
Transfers, s.11 · R3.10. R3.7
records management program
ARCS and ORCS · M9.2
Cabinet documents · M9.8
disposal of records · M9.2
training · M9.2
recreation management
public use · R4.1
responsibilities · R4.1
remission · *see write off and remission*
research trials · *see silviculture trials*
residue and waste management surveys · R11.5
revenue
administration and control · R12.4
risk management · R12.4. R12.1
Review Officials · R16.22. R16.22
review panels, Administrative Reviews · R16.22. R16.22
Rewards and Recognition Program · M5.4
risk assessment, operational activities · R17.1
risk control · M6.5
risk management
business disruption response/recovery · M10.1
ongoing risks · M6.5
road construction authority amendments · R8.22

S

s. 22, Forest health · R10.1
safety precautions
demonstrations and sit-ins · M1.5
firearms · M6.3
stopping vehicles · R16.7. R16.7
salary administration, excluded management
employees · M4.6
sales, cruise based · R8.16
sawlog trees · R8.20
SBFEP Bid Proposal Program, Timber Sale Licences · R14.1
scale sites
check scales · R13.3
data monitoring · R13.3
designation of place · R13.2
inspections · R13.3
site authorization · R13.1
site file · R13.1
scaler's
authorization and appointment · R13.4
oath · R13.4
scaling
board of examiners · R13.4
licence · R13.4
suspensions and cancellations · R13.4
requirements · R13.5
submission of scale data · R13.5
timber scale returns · R11.6
Scaling Administration System (SCS) · R16.6. R16.6
Scaling Regulation
Applications for licence to scale, s.18 · R13.4
Place of scaling, s.3 · R13.2. R13.1
Prosecutions, s. 23 · R16.19. R16.19
s. 23, Prosecutions · R16.19. R16.19

s.18, Applications for licence to scale · R13.4
s.19, Scaling examinations · R13.4
s.3, Place of scaling · R13.2. R13,1
s.5, Scaling procedures · R13.5
Scaling examinations, s.19 · R13.4
Scaling procedures, s.5 · R13.5
scheduled change · R18.1
Security for Forest Practice Liabilities Regulation
Prosecutions, s. 4 · R16.19. R16.19
s. 4, Prosecutions · R16.19. R16.19
security, demonstrations and sit-ins · M1.5
seed
allocation · R2.2
storage · R2.2
transfer · R2.2
Seed Orchard Agreements · R2.2
seed orchards and production facilities · R2.1
seeding of disturbed land · R2.7
seeding program · R2.7
seeding reports · R2.10
seeding, direct · R2.10
seedling supply and distribution · R2.23
seizure of timber, chattels, hay, etc. · R16.15. R16.15
Senior Officials · R16.4. R16.4
sexual harassment · M4.9
signing authority · *see financial signing authority*
silvicultural systems · R2.6
silviculture
direct seeding · R2.10
silviculture operational plans · R2.20
Silviculture Practices Regulation
commercial thinning · R2.13
Cone and seed, s. 2 · R2.2
Direct seeding · R2.10
Part 3, Div. 5, Silviculture surveys · R10.1
Pesticide regulation and use · R10.2
s. 2, Cone and Seed · R2.2
s.8, Seed orchards and production facilities · R2.1
Seed orchards and production facilities, s. 8 · R2.1
silviculture operational plans · R2.20
Silviculture surveys, Part 3, Div. 5 · R10.1
Vegetation management · R2.18
Silviculture Prescription · R2.13
Silviculture Regulation
Basic silviculture, s.6 · R2.6
Obligation of the Crown respecting basic silviculture, s.5 · R2.6
Prescriptions, s.2 · R2.7. R2.6
s.2, Prescriptions · R2.7. R2.6
s.5, Obligation of the Crown respecting basic silviculture · R2.6
s.6, Basic silviculture · R2.6
s.7, Silviculture prescription required · R2.6
Silviculture prescription required, s.7 · R2.6
silviculture treatment and reporting · R2.19
silviculture trials · R2.5
sit-ins · M1.5
Small Business Forest Enterprise Program
commercial thinning · R2.13
seedling supply and distribution · R2.23
Small Business Forest Enterprise Regulation
Timber Sale Licences · R14.1
smoke management plans · R9.2
special forest products · *see forest products, special*
Special Forest Products Regulation · R8.12
standard identification codes and symbols
approval of new · M7.1
design structure · M7.1
vegetation codes · R7.2
when to use · M7.1
stumpage appraisals
modification of estimates · R11.2
requirements and limitations · R11.2
standard estimates · R11.2
stumpage liability · M3.2
surveyors, residue · R11.5
symbols and codes · *see standard identification codes and symbols*
Systems Act · M9.2
systems review · see *operational systems review*

T

taxol · R8.12
tenure holder responsibilities · R3.1 to R3.10
tenures · R11.6, R12.2
administration · R3.9
commensurability · R3.10
grazing · R3.1
hay cutting · R3.2
integrated resource management · R3.9
suspension and cancellation · R3.5
terms and conditions · R3.9
transfer · R3.7
TFL · *see Tree Farm Licence*
ticketing
files · R16.6. R16.6
warning and violation · R16.11. R16.11
Timber Harvesting Contracts and Subcontracts Regulation
Prosecutions , s. 6 · R16.19. R16.19
s. 6, Prosecutions · R16.19. R16.19
timber invoicing
adjustments · R11.6
interim billing · R11.6
weigh scale final billing · R11.6
timber marking and transportation
branding · R13.2
documentation (transport) · R13.2
marking method · R13.2
Timber Marking Regulation · R13.2

timber records and reporting
confidentiality · R11.3
inspection of records · R11.3
types of reports · R11.3
Timber Sale Licences, SBFEP Bid Proposal Program · R14.1
timber scale returns · R11.6
timber utilization · R8.1
training · *see employee training*
training for firearms use · M6.3
transfer of tenure
consent to · R3.7
criteria for transfer · R3.7
Tree Cone, Seed, and Vegetative Material Regulation
Cone and Seed · R2.2
Direct seeding · R2.10
Prosecutions, s. 6 · R16.19. R16.19
s. 6, Prosecutions · R16.19. R16.19
s.4, Seed orchards and production facilities · R2.1
s.5, Seed orchards and production facilities · R2.1
Seed orchards and production facilities, s.4 & 5 · R2.1
Tree Farm Licence
inventory audit · R1.1
licensee responsibilities · R1.1
tree seed and vegetative materials registration · R2.1
Tree Seed Centre processing · R2.2
Tree Seed Program · R2.2
Tree Seed Register and Inventory System · R2.2
trials · *see silviculture trials*

U

utilization of timber · R8.1

V

vegetation management · R2.18
Vegetation Management Demonstration Areas · R2.18
Vegetation Management Strategy · R2.18
vehicles
Ministry, operation and maintenance · M8.3
private · M8.3
stopping · R16.7. R16.7
vessels, operation and maintenance of · M8.1
Violation Ticket Administration Regulation
ticketing · R16.11. R16.11
Violation Ticket Fines Regulation
ticketing · R16.11. R16.11
violation tickets · R16.11. R16.11

W

warning tickets · R16.11. R16.11
Waste Management Act
Smoke management · R9.2
white pine improvement · R2.4
wildfire management
command structure and decision making · R9.1
compensation · R9.1
control action · R9.1
planning · R9.4
safety and training · R9.1
wildfire prevention · R9.1
Wildlife Act · M6.3
wildlife trees · R8.11
wood products, sale and use · R2.3
woodlot licence · *see licence, woodlot*
Woodlot Licence Area Regulation
Woodlot licence boundary revisions · R8.17
Woodlot licence Crown land area increases · R8.18
Woodlot Licence Program
competition, evaluation, award · R8.9
Crown land area increases · R8.18
forest resource management · R8.18
general administration · R8.7
minor revisions to boundaries · R8.17
private land exchanges and deletions · R8.8
replacement · R8.10
Workers' Compensation Board coverage, contracts · M3.12
write off and remission · M3.5

Y

yew bark harvesting/collection · R8.12